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ABSTRACT

A convening process was used to study the feasibility of a career ladder program for public school teachers in the District of Columbia. Eight educators from outside the system met on July 13-15, 1987, to analyze problems in the current system concerning: (1) the need to compete for quality teachers; (2) making career opportunities available; (3) the teacher evaluation process; and (4) the professional development program. A comprehensive career ladder program was recommended, which should be: (1) related to student achievement; (2) involve a cross-section of professionals; (3) be tied to district-wide and school instructional improvement goals; (4) be tied to professional performance; (5) built on a valid, reliable, and equitable personnel evaluation system; (6) develop a process for making career advancement decisions; (7) monitor the advancement decision process at the district level; and (8) integrate staff development with personnel evaluation. The goals of the program are to build upon and support student performance goals by improving instruction and providing incentives to teachers to remain in the profession and build their effectiveness. The program should contain a strong beginning teacher support system; serve the developmental needs of experienced teachers; and enhance professional aspects of teaching in the District of Columbia Public Schools. Appendix A describes the convening process. The agenda and a list of the participants of the convening event, and interview questions are appended. (SLD)

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CAREER LADDERS FOR TEACHERS
A REPORT OF A FEASIBILITY STUDY OF A CAREER LADDER
PROGRAM FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DIVISION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

AND

MANAGEMENT PLANNING

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PREFACE

In July, 1987 a small group of experienced educators from school districts, state departments of education, and universities across the United States was convened by the Division of Quality Assurance to examine the potential benefits and the feasibility of implementing a career ladder or differentiated staffing program in the District of Columbia Public Schools. The educators were invited to participate because they have had significant experience either designing, implementing, or studying the implementation of career ladder programs in school districts or states. The questions put to the group were simple and straight forward: Should the District of Columbia Public Schools consider a career ladder program for its teachers? What benefits could be anticipated from implementing such a program? And, considering the specific context of the District of Columbia Public Schools, what steps should the school district take to implement a career ladder program?

The process used to examine the feasibility and potential benefits of a career ladder program was based on a model developed by Norman Gold, Director of Research and Evaluation, while was a Senior Research Associate at the National Institute of Education. The "Convening Process", as it is known, has been used as a policy analysis tool in several school districts to examine significant policy issues. It has been used previously in the District of Columbia Public Schools. Michael Kane and Dennis Holmes organized and co-chaired the process, a full description of which can be found in Appendix A.

This is a report of the findings and recommendations of the convening process. All participants authored sections of the report. Michael Kane, in his role as chair, authored this final version of the report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is facing a decade of changing personnel conditions. A majority of the current teaching force is nearing eligibility for retirement, the baby boom echo is becoming school age, and school improvement initiatives are reducing class size and increasing the need for teachers. All the while, teacher preparation enrollments are at all time lows and teachers already in service report low levels of morale due to increasing dissatisfaction with the working conditions of teaching; particularly the increased bureaucratization of instructional processes.

Career Ladder programs for teachers have been touted in several national and state reports as a potentially effective vehicle to increase the attractiveness of a career in teaching for both new recruits as well as for those already in the classroom and considering a career change. The effort reported here convened eight senior educators with experience implementing career ladder programs to meet with DCPS staff and community member and report whether and, if so how, a career ladder program may assist DCPS in its teacher recruitment and retention efforts.

The consultants found four areas which present a series of serious obstacles to DCPS as it seeks to achieve its goals of improving student performance through building instructional quality. These are:

- o the need to compete successfully for high quality teachers
- o making career oppotunities in teaching available
- o the teacher evaluation process
- o the professional development program

It is the consultants' recommendation that DCPS establish a comprehensive career development program which incorporates elements of career ladder models with its already established Intern-Mentor program. This program should be supported by a strong program of professional development which in itself provides additional career opportunities for senior teachers of quality. This approach would reinforce and enhance the systemic relationships among DCPS's goal setting, certification, evaluation and professional development activities while serving the developmental needs of its teachers.

Specifically, the consultants recommend nine program requirements. They recommend the program:

- o be related to student achievement
- o involve a cross section of professional personnel

- o be tied to district wide and school instructional improvement goals
- o be tied to professional performance
- o build upon a valid, reliable, equitable personnel evaluation system
- o develop a process for making career advancement decisions which involve peers and building principals, using multiple sources of objective valid and reliable evidence of performance and qualification
- o monitor the process for making advancement decisions at the District level
- o integrate staff development with personnel evaluation

The report goes on to identify and discuss a series of steps and decision points the District will engage as it considers the design and implementation of a career ladder program.

I. INTRODUCTION

The District of Columbia Public Schools is facing a decade of changing personnel conditions. These changes may provide an opportunity for the District to accelerate its current rate of progress or they may become barriers to the Districts' ability to continue to build its effectiveness. There are no well marked routes to either outcome. Clearly, though, the path to the preferred future will require hard work, mutual respect and trust, and accommodation by all the various constituencies of the system: the central administration, the teachers, school administrators, union leadership, the Board of Education and the general public.

Indicators of coming changes are already being felt in the system. While most current DCPS instructional staff are well prepared for their position, dedicated and competent, they are also nearing eligibility for retirement. New District policy initiatives, such as reducing class size, have increased the overall numbers of instructional personnel needed. Meanwhile, young people have increasingly eschewed teaching for other career alternatives - especially those highly talented minorities from whose ranks the current generation of DCPS teachers were drawn. DCPS personnel evaluation and staff development systems are fragmented by the realities of administering a large, complex school system within a bureaucratic web of regulation, law and work rules. Teachers are demanding increased autonomy, recognition and compensation as professionals, while, the general public demands increased accountability from their schools.

Recently, a major citizen interest group issued a report citing concerns over teacher quality, the District's ability to ascertain and judge that quality and the District's ability to recruit effectively, especially given external factors such as residency requirements. Regardless of the validity of the concerns raised in this report, its existence signals the increased attention personnel issues will be receiving in the decade ahead.

The effective resolution of instructional personnel issues is essential to the provision of quality instruction. Their resolution will likely require attention to all the elements identified in the paragraphs above. Ultimately though, successful resolution will require action on two fronts simultaneously - the financial and the structural. To compete effectively in the marketplace for talented young people, teaching will have to offer meaningful financial rewards as well as attractive working conditions. These will have to include opportunities for professional growth and the independent exercise of professional judgement

and responsibility.

This document reports the results of an effort commissioned by DCPS to explore one possible future option to address teacher working conditions. Career ladder programs for teachers have been touted in various national and state reports as a potentially effective vehicle to increase the attractiveness of a career in teaching for both new recruits as well as for those already teaching who might otherwise leave the career. The effort reported here convened eight senior individuals with experience implementing career ladder programs. We followed a specific and highly structured process to learn about the DCPS situation and to apply our previous experience in recommending action. Our charge was to review the current DCPS personnel situation and advise the District whether, and if so how, the implementation of a career ladder program and/or additional differentiated staffing opportunities could serve to alleviate personnel problems it may be facing.

While we were focused on the career ladder concept, we were looking at it within the context of other related developmental work already well underway in the District. In conducting our review we found evidence that several personnel related elements of the District's current operations, and likely future, require attention. We believe the careful development and implementation of a comprehensive career development program for teachers would enhance these areas of operation, the quality of the District's instructional personnel and the instruction received by the District's students. A program such as we will describe will also have the effect of creating a career ladder for teachers by increasing career options and professional opportunity for the District's instructional staff. We believe this will, in turn, enhance the District's recruitment and retention capacity.

The following section briefly identifies those areas requiring attention and our general recommendations. Next, nine requirement for program development are given. The final section identifies twelve areas which must be targeted for specific decisions concerning the nature and form of the program. For the interested reader a series of appendices describe the process used to arrive at these recommendations and the backgrounds of the consultants involved.

II. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Briefing materials, preliminary teleconference discussions and the initial meetings of the convening consultants emphasized that the value of the career ladder concept remained an open question in the District. There were no foredrawn conclusions among the leadership of DCPS either for or against the implementation of a career ladder/differentiated staffing program. Accordingly, developing a thorough understanding of the presenting context was an important order of business for the consultants. Several aspects of the system's context stood out strongly. These include four areas which we believe present a series of serious issues which confound the achievement of the District's widely recognized dual goals of improving student performance through building instructional quality. These areas include: 1) The need to compete successfully for high quality teachers; 2) making career opportunities in teaching available 3) the teacher evaluation process; and 4) the professional development program. Each of these are discussed below.

FINDINGS

THE NEED TO COMPETE SUCCESSFULLY FOR HIGH QUALITY TEACHERS

The anticipated turnover of the DCPS teaching staff will have a tremendous effect on teacher supply and quality during the next decade. Available projections indicate that approximately seventy-five percent of current teachers will be either eligible to retire or will have retired by 1993. As a result of retirements, as well as of other policy initiatives and changing youth demographics, the demand for new teachers in DCPS will become much greater and more significant than in past years. The challenge for the system will be to recruit and retain skilled teachers who demonstration excellence through the delivery of quality instruction to students.

The problems of supply and quality the district faces have been exacerbated by the enrollment decline and associated staff retrenchment that occurred earlier in the district's history. The retrenchment period skewed the age of the current teaching force upward and turned attention away from recruitment and induction processes. The district must, therefore, rebuild this capacity.

As DCPS confronts the challenge to recruit highly qualified teachers, it must also work arduously to retain them. A positive work environment which fosters the highest levels of professionalism is essential. Teachers generally, and DCPS teachers in particular, are not satisfied with the work environment as it exists today. Neither are young people who are considering careers as teachers. Teachers, as professionals, expect to be involved in all aspects of the instructional process, including instructional decision-making. Teachers wish to be trained and their talents tapped so that many of them will be able to become leaders of teachers as well as teachers of students. Currently, DCPS appears to be lacking in mechanisms either to provide this kind of opportunity for exceptional teachers or to provide supervision and assistance to those experienced teachers in need of help. These needs must be addressed. Every effort possible must be made to enhance the effectiveness of the current work force.

MAKING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN TEACHING AVAILABLE

In DCPS there are only limited career opportunities for teachers who wish to remain "in teaching" and in many instances these are temporary. Little differentiation exists in classroom teachers' responsibilities beyond the roles given department heads, team leaders and to teachers with particular extra-curricular assignments. Most differentiated responsibilities for teachers move them from the regular classroom to special assignments such as serving as resource teachers or curriculum specialists for which they are generally paid the same salary as regular classroom teachers. While there are unique historical reasons for this particular situation in DCPS, it is a problem that exists in many other school districts as well.

There are, however, some components already operational that do provide new career opportunities for teachers. Unfortunately, these are limited. The Mentor-Teacher Program, department chairs, team/grade level leaders, resource teachers and other incentive/award programs are effective options for a few teachers but not for many. Also, there are questions among the staff about how fairly these opportunities are allocated. Other possible approaches should be explored as ways to provide opportunity for teachers to assume differentiated roles and responsibilities.

THE TEACHER EVALUATION PROCESS

DCPS Superintendent Floretta McKenzie expressed a desire "to evaluate in such a way that those being evaluated respect the evaluation." After extensive discussion with personnel at all levels in the system, it appears that the DCPS

personnel evaluation system is not highly respected by many people in the school district. As we will describe in a later section of this report, to be on a par with best practice, the current evaluation process and instrument require review and revision. The district must determine the major purpose of its teacher evaluation process and design a system to serve that purpose.

Participants identified several specific problems with the current evaluation system. These are described in considerable detail in section IV. In general, to be most effective, a staff evaluation process should also be linked to the personnel selection process and coordinated with the staff development program. Personnel should be hired, trained and evaluated on agreed upon criteria and standards that minimize the variables of subjectivity and politics as much as possible. From our interviews it is questionable whether these goals are currently being achieved sufficiently in DCPS.

Some specific problems which were reported to be associated with the DCPS teacher evaluation process include: 1) a lack of time for principals to observe teachers and provide support, 2) a lack of adequate training for principals, 3) a tendency to transfer rather than dismiss incompetent teachers, 4) a general concern over administrator/teacher relationships, and 5) a lack of connection between teacher evaluation results and pupil performance. Subsequent sections of this report discuss the evaluation process in greater detail.

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Over and over again, District staff expressed the need to tie the evaluation process to focussed staff development offerings. Currently, staff development is designed around content area needs assessments. A plethora of courses and workshops are offered and are well disseminated, but they are not perceived to be linked, in a systematic way, to the system's priorities and performance expectations. Whether courses do or do not meet identified needs of teachers and administrators seems a matter of chance rather than design.

Teachers expressed a desire to be more involved as planners, designers and implementers of professional development activities. Such involvement may respond to some concerns expressed about the quality and sufficiency of courses and workshops. The scheduling and timing of offerings, another expressed concern, might also be addressed through the involvement of teachers.

Another related concern expressed by several staff members was a perceived need to revise the certification

process. Currently, there is one kind of certificate (standard) and the only courses that meet certification requirements are those offered by colleges and universities. Some interviewees felt the District should study the feasibility of providing credit for inservice course work and thereby create an additional incentive for teacher renewal and professional growth.

Improvements in staff development offerings and the certification process are essential if DCPS is to recruit, retain, renew and retrain highly qualified teachers in the numbers needed in the years ahead. Ideally, staff development and certification would be linked to evaluation and would be planned to meet the needs of teachers while creating a variety of career options for them -- as is being done in the Intern - Mentor program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to these findings, and our charge to advise DCPS on the potential of a career ladder/differentiated staffing program, we offer three overall recommendations. In the next section we follow these recommendations with a set of requirements for their development and ultimate implementation. We believe these requirements should underlie whatever specific program emerges from the planning process in which DCPS will have to engage if it chooses to implement our recommendations.

1. DCPS should take action to initiate a comprehensive career development program.

The DCPS commitment to the goals of improving student performance and building instructional quality will be enhanced by a well-designed, comprehensive, career development program which provides instructional staff a variety of career opportunity options. It is our belief such a program will support DCPS to attract and retain quality teachers and reinforce the systemic relationships among its goal setting, certification, teacher evaluation, and professional development activities.

For these reasons it is recommended that DCPS:

- o move towards implementing a comprehensive career development program by
- o building initially on extant elements of role differentiation while developing over time
- o a performance based teacher evaluation system to support a career ladder program which includes

- 1: career induction stages for beginning teachers
 - 2: career distinction stages based upon documented performance abilities
 - 3: advanced stages of professional practice which include job enlargement roles
2. The career distinction stages of the career ladder should be supported by a strong professional growth and development program.

By career distinction stages we mean the development of additional levels of professional identification within the role of classroom teacher i.e. master teacher, professional teacher, senior teacher, etc. The attainment of these levels should be based upon the application of a set of criteria which may include additional training, observed performance assessments, pencil and paper tests, student performance, professional portfolios, peer review, etc.

The development of these performance-based career distinction stages should include provision by DCPS of opportunities and support for individual professional growth and development. DCPS should continue to clearly identify both outstanding teaching strategies and measures of student performance while undergirding each teacher with a planned program of professional support.

Each beginning teacher should be made aware of the DCPS ideal of excellence, required to participate in structuring a professional development program designed to help them excel and be supported in his or her efforts to grow and move up the professional ladder. The comprehensive career development program should not only reward excellence; it should provide leadership and support to teachers as they seek the achievement of excellence.

3. Each rung of the career ladder should be designed to enhance student-teacher interaction.

A career development program should center upon a comprehensive set of personnel evaluation and professional development activities, role differentiation, and the support of excellence in the instructional areas of schooling. The program should not create levels of separation from the teaching-learning process. The job enlargement elements of the program should not permanently remove instructional personnel from student-teacher interaction. As teachers move up a career ladder, their impact on the teaching-learning process should be intensified, though that impact may, in part, be indirect through the coaching of other teachers or

the upgrading of curriculum.

SUMMARY

If DCPS is to continue its progress in improving student performance through building instructional quality it must address pressing problems concerning teacher supply, career opportunity, evaluation and professional development. We believe the design and implementation of a comprehensive career development program which includes a structure of differentiated professional opportunity would be an effective approach to systematically overcoming identified problems. The goals of the program are twofold:

- o Build upon and support student performance goals by improving instruction while
- o providing financial and other incentives to teachers to remain in the profession and build their effectiveness.

Such a program would be a powerful vehicle to attract and retain high quality teachers to DCPS. The program should:

- o contain a strong beginning teacher support system (such as currently exists in the inter-mentor program) to improve the rate of retention of new teachers.
- o reinforce the systemic relationships among DCPS goal setting, certification, evaluation and professional development activities in order to serve the developmental needs of experienced teachers.
- o build upon the elements of differentiated staffing which already exist in the school system to enhance the professional aspects of teaching in DCPS.

In the following section we recommend nine requirements to guide program development. There are many points on which a successful career develop program for DCPS may vary - - these are identified in section IV - - however, we feel the nine recommended requirements should be considered as just that - as requirements. We believe for the program to be successfull in DCPS these nine elements should not be compromised.

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Based on the interactions of the consultant team in the school district, analysis of various written materials provided by the school district and the past experiences shared by the consultants, we provide nine requirements for program implementation. These are the basic design criteria upon which the program should be built:

1. The program should be related to student performance.

Increasing student achievement, particularly in the basic learning and communication skills, is the primary objective of the District of Columbia Public Schools. Any major new program initiative, including the establishment of a career ladder, ought to contribute significantly to the goal of increasing student learning.

A career ladder can influence student achievement in at least three ways. First, by offering career options a career ladder program is intended to attract and retain more highly qualified people into the teaching force than would be attracted without the opportunities inherent in the career ladder. Highly skilled, professionally stimulated teachers are more likely to advance student learning.

A second way that a career ladder can increase student performance is by utilizing the special skills and expertise of teachers to upgrade curriculum content, coach others in teaching skills and develop better means of assessing student progress. As teachers move up the career ladder they can be assigned to more difficult teaching assignments as well as take on those additional professional responsibilities that have a direct bearing on student achievement. They can be given time and recognition for fulfilling those responsibilities beyond their teaching activities. The actual labels and structure for performing these roles can be tailored to the needs of the individual school district but the roles will primarily involve the curriculum development, personnel mentoring and student assessment functions identified.

Finally, student achievement can be enhanced by utilizing student performance as one evaluation criterion for promoting teachers on the career ladder. Teaching is a complex professional activity that requires multiple lines of evidence to assess adequately. Progress in student learning can and should be one of the lines of evidence. To the extent that student learning is a factor used to evaluate and promote teachers, student achievement is likely to increase.

2. Program development should involve a cross-section of professional personnel.

If a comprehensive personnel development program, which will impact many individuals and initiate significant organizational change, is to be successful, a representative cross-section of professional personnel must be involved in its development and implementation. This involvement should be initiated at the very beginning of planning and should be carried on throughout the implementation and refinement phases. Only in this way will feelings of program ownership be widespread throughout the district. Further, formally involving teachers will help eradicate the otherwise likely belief that the new program "is being done to us."

3. The program should reward contributions of individuals to the system.

A career ladder is more than just another program along side the many programs operated by the district. Properly conceived and implemented, the career ladder can be the driving force behind most, if not all, of the instructional improvement programs in the district. By tying career ladder responsibilities to the goals of the district and individual schools, teacher talents and energy can be mobilized and used to advance the educational priorities of the district. The whole improvement effort can be greatly accelerated as teachers are given the time to make unique efforts and are rewarded for their contributions to the improvement of teaching and learning. The career ladder can mobilize the human resources necessary to accomplish district priorities. At the same time it can provide professional incentives and rewards that stimulate and satisfy outstanding teachers who thrive both on teaching and making professional contributions beyond their individual classrooms.

4. The program should be tied to district-wide and school instructional improvement goals.

In order to achieve its full impact on student performance and the quality of professional performance, the program should be closely tied to instructional improvement goals set annually for the district and by individual schools. Job enlargement role responsibilities, professional development requirements for career distinction roles and beginning teacher advancement requirements can all be related to district wide and school needs and goals. In this way the community and parents will understand the importance placed by the district personnel on the program, and everyone employed by the district will be working to meet these goals. In effect, the district-wide and school instructional improvement goals will become goals of the program.

5. The program should be tied to professional performance.

This can be done in three ways. First, teaching proficiency should be a qualifying criterion for promotion on all steps of a career ladder. It need not be the only criterion for advancement, but no teacher should be given additional professional recognition or responsibility with accompanying monetary and other kinds of rewards who has not met a high standard of teaching proficiency. The career ladder is intended to encourage, promote, stimulate and reward excellent teaching. It is intended to provide incentives for keeping outstanding teachers in the classroom. Teaching performance should be a major factor in qualifying teachers for advancement on a career ladder. If this is not done the program will have no meaning or impact on instructional improvement and should not be implemented.

A second way performance should be involved in any career ladder plan concerns the way the specific skills and knowledge that a teacher offers to a new career ladder position are considered. Assuming first that teaching competence has been assessed according to a well conceived evaluation process, the next concern to be addressed is what additional attributes a teacher brings to a particular career ladder responsibility. There may be several excellent teachers competing for a given career ladder position. Different positions will require different skills. Some may relate to curriculum; others may require classroom observation and feedback skills; still other positions may call for skill in developing criterion referenced test items. What teachers know or how they have performed in relation to career ladder job specifications should have a bearing on the selection process.

Finally, performance in a career ladder position should be assessed and evaluated in a systematic way. There are expectations associated with additional responsibilities. Teachers should be held accountable for their performance in relation to their career ladder responsibilities. Job descriptions or expectations should be articulated in writing so that teachers who have been promoted understand clearly, from the beginning, what is expected of them and to whom they are accountable. They should be given feedback on their performance from time to time and an assessment, should be made of their work, at least annually.

6. The program should build upon valid, reliable, equitable personnel evaluation system(s).

Evaluations of performance for career ladder positions or stipends is summative evaluation. These evaluation are not being used for formative or professional development

purposes, but rather to support career advancement decisions. Data used in these decisions can be easily discredited and the decisions overturned unless the measurement/assessment instruments and procedures can be shown to be valid and reliable, and unless those who administer the instruments demonstrate consistency in administration.

Validity and equitability in the evaluation process demand that all procedures used be systematized and standardized across the school district. The validity and reliability of the evaluation process itself depends, in part, on the careful training and monitoring of data collectors and evaluators. This is an aspect of evaluation programs which is often overlooked or shortchanged. Our review of the evaluation instruments and procedures currently used in the District of Columbia Public Schools suggest several validity and reliability problems. We believe these shortcomings are the reasons behind the high levels of dissatisfaction we have observed with the TAP on the part of many teachers and administrators interviewed (this point will be expanded in detail in the next section). The career ladder program must not repeat these failings or it too will fail to obtain the respect of district staff.

7. The process for making advancement decisions should involve peers and building principals, using multiple sources of objective, valid and reliable evidence of performance and qualification.

Current selection processes used for job enlargement (building resource teachers, department heads etc.) decisions in the District of Columbia Schools are not perceived by many we interviewed to be uniformly and fairly conducted. In order to establish confidence and ownership in the selection process, teachers should be involved as data collectors, and in other highly involved ways such as by interviewing position candidates and helping to set selection criteria. Principals should be involved in these ways as well and should also serve as one of the sources of data upon which decisions are made. These procedures will place the process close to the persons whom the decisions will impact, a factor found necessary to the success of career ladder/career development programs.

District of Columbia teachers have expressed a desire to be a part of the collection of data on teacher performance but they do not wish to be responsible for the evaluation decision itself. This desire should be reinforced as research clearly demonstrates that teaching teachers to use low inference teacher performance observation instruments is an excellent staff development approach which leads to instructional improvement in the user's classroom. Therefore, involving teachers in the evaluation process can

directly support the district's student achievement goals. The work of the principal will be directly impacted by providing job enlargement opportunities for teachers. Principals are already presumed to be responsible for the evaluation of teachers. They must also be included in career ladder evaluation and selection. However, the consultant team has found in other school districts and states that principals do not want to be solely responsible for the data collection and judgements required in selecting teachers for career ladder positions. Indeed, their present work load and their responsibilities in leading their faculties both suggest that others should also assist in making career ladder placement decisions.

8. The process for making advancement decisions must be monitored and reviewed at the system/district level.

Our encouragement to locate data collection processes and selection procedures close to the people impacted should not be misinterpreted. Selection criteria, data collection procedures, instrumentation for data collection, training of data collectors and procedures for interpreting data and rendering judgements must be standardized across the district and careful attention must be given to the validity, reliability, equity and objectivity of the selection process.

Fairness, equitability, consistency and standardization are dependent upon the system-wide structure the school district creates to monitor and review selection procedures and the utilization of persons selected for new career ladder roles and responsibilities. Further, training of data collectors, evaluators and career development trainers should be centralized to ensure common perceptions, language, expectations, conceptualizations, and data collector reliability across the district. It should be remembered that it is the school district which will be subject to the appeal of and responsibility for a decision once one is rendered.

9. The overall career development program should integrate staff development with personnel evaluation.

The effective career development of educational personnel includes several sets of activities. One set involves the identification of areas of weakness or need in performance. A second involves giving of assistance for improvement. The first purpose of staff development programs is to provide a means of professional improvement, ideally in areas of need identified through performance evaluation. Our work with DCPS found some evidence to suggest that, with the exception of the intern-mentor program, there is currently insufficient linkage between the DCPS staff development programs and the results of personnel evaluation. Even the relationship

between current staff development programs and teacher perceived needs is questionable. While several persons interviewed suggested that staff development offerings are based on needs assessments several others, particularly teachers, felt that there was little teacher involvement in the decisions made about staff development offerings and little relation between those programs and their professional needs.

In reviewing the situation described here, the reader should keep clearly in mind that two separate points have been made: 1) teachers do not perceive that current staff development efforts relate to what they want and need; 2) there is little evidence that current staff development efforts are based on evaluation results (evidence of instructional practices which can and should be strengthened). The second point is far more important than the first since research indicates there is, at best, a weak correlation between teacher perceived needs and teaching practices proven to be effective in facilitating student achievement. However, objectively evaluated teaching deficiencies should be remediated.

The final section of this report provides another level of expanded and detailed recommendations concerning the issues the program requirements elaborated above are intended to address.

IV. STRATEGIES AND DECISION POINTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The preceding section presented nine recommended requirements for the development and implementation of a comprehensive career development program in the District of Columbia Public Schools. This section contains more detailed specifications for implementation. We have chosen to label these recommendations as decision points. They represent, at present, the best thinking of the consultant team based upon the information gathered within the District and the experiences various team members have had in confronting similar issues and conditions while designing and implementing programs in other states and school districts. However, the recommendations contained herein truly represent decision points for the District of Columbia Public Schools because the administration and Board of Education will need to evaluate each point in light of District goals, priorities and capabilities and, on the basis of their much greater knowledge of local conditions, decide whether to follow these or alternative courses of action.

In many cases, members of the consultant team (or others with experience in the areas under consideration) can pinpoint even more specifically strategies, procedures and choices available to the District if it chooses to act in accordance with these recommendations. A few examples of this level of decision are provided in Appendix D. However, third level procedural decisions and strategies are moot until conscious decisions to adopt the overall recommendations in the report have been made:

1. Develop an organization plan for a career ladder task force.

While we recognize that a decision to engage in planning a program is not a decision to implement a program, we nevertheless recommend that as soon as a decision is made to move beyond the most exploratory planning stages of a career development program for the District, a district-wide task force should be formed. System-wide ownership for the program should be established at the outset by totally involving a broad cross section of professional staff on this task force.

The size of the task force should be small enough to insure productivity and the ability to achieve consensus. While an exploratory task force might be very small, for a planning task force we recommend a body of about twenty members and a chairperson, composed as follows:

Teachers: Ten of the twenty members should be teachers. One of the ten could be appointed by the union and not necessarily be a teacher. Some of the teachers would probably also be union members. The teachers should represent different levels (elementary/secondary), special programs (counselors, librarians, etc.) the different local regions and reflect the district's ratio of sex and race distribution.

Officers: The other ten members should be administrators representing staff and line personnel. Building principals from different levels and regions, and associate superintendents and directors from key areas affected by a career ladder (Personnel, Staff Development, Instruction) should be included.

Chairperson: The Superintendent should be the chairperson and twenty-first member of the Task Force. It is crucial for the district and the community to perceive and believe the importance placed on this task force and the career ladder program. A primary way to emphasize this importance is in the choice of the group's leader. The Superintendent may wish to turn the time-consuming task of staffing the task force over to an in-house group such as the Division of Quality Assurance or to an external consultant working through such a group. However, the superintendent must remain a visible and energetic chairperson of the taskforce.

2. Determine and formalize the relationship between the task force's developmental work and the work of a related group charged with developing a new evaluation process.

Regardless of the career ladder model chosen by DCPS, the consultants are unanimous in their conclusion that the present evaluation process used in the district is not sufficient for the requirements of any type of career ladder program. In practice, the present system hardly differentiates at all among teachers. Neither the criteria used nor the method of gathering and assessing the data are adequate for reasons elaborated in item 8. of this section.

We recommend strongly that a representative group of the professional staff be organized to develop a new evaluation process at the same time that a career ladder task force is formulating a career ladder model for the district. The work of the two groups is closely related. They should keep one another apprised of their progress and meet occasionally to share their ideas and give one another feedback. The final products of both groups should be compatible and complementary. It may be advantageous to have a small subset of individuals participate in both groups to help assure that the evaluation process developed fits the career ladder model that is adopted by the district.

3. Develop routinized communication links and procedures.

As with every new program, effective communication is critical to the program's success. Strategies for written and oral communication should consciously be enacted in order to:

- establish practical and comprehensive feedback loops
- involve all personnel and insure broad ownership of the program
- inform the community and parents and provide a structure for their input
- cut down on misinformation and rumor mills.

Several communication strategies have proven effective in other programs.

Feedback loops: Feedback loops allow for ideas, suggestions, recommendations and information, decisions and adopted procedures to flow between the career ladder task force, schools and individuals. Each school could have a career ladder representative; these representatives could be in constant touch with one or two liaisons (teachers on temporary assignment during the planning phase - possibly one semester or year); these liaisons could communicate directly with the task force.

Written material: As soon as key decisions are determined, they should be communicated in writing. This process allows for reactions and encourages suggestions and recommendations for the next set of decisions. Written communication could be in the form of topical flyers, charts or graphs or philosophical statements.

Hotline: A telephone hotline could be established to reduce misinformation and rumor and to provide accurate information.

Formal presentations and informal dialogues: The liaison teachers and members of the task force could make formal presentations and attend community meetings to explain and promote the program to parents and other community members.

Video and slide/tape presentations: These visual aids could help explain the program to community and to district personnel.

Question/answer sheets: A simple form could be available for questions to be answered quickly and personally.

Brochures, pamphlets, handbooks: As the program becomes defined formal written material could be developed and printed for local and national dissemination.

4. Determine the type of career ladder that would best meet the needs of the District of Columbia Public Schools.

There are three major types of career ladders that have been or are under development in various states and school districts around the country. One type emphasizes special rewards and recognition for teaching excellence without any additional expectations. This is a "merit pay" model that rewards teachers differentially for perceived differences in their teaching performance. Some teachers are judged to be more effective in the classroom than others and are provided additional remuneration in one form or another in recognition of their outstanding teaching performance. This model tends to be popular with legislators, businessmen and large segments of the public. It appears to the layman as simple justice and a natural application of the free enterprise economic system to the teaching profession.

The "merit pay" model is generally unpopular with teachers. The 1984 DCPS studies revealed that D.C. teachers are no different in their attitude toward merit pay than teachers generally. In addition to strong teacher opposition, there are other difficulties with the "merit pay" model. Merit pay depends entirely on the teacher evaluation process. It is very difficult, bordering on impossible, to devise an evaluation process that is sufficiently reliable, credible and economically feasible to work effectively. There are enormous technical, political and economic hurdles to overcome which few districts in the long history of merit pay have been successful in doing.

Another difficulty with merit pay is that it does not utilize teachers' time, energy or expertise to make significant professional contributions beyond classroom teaching. Under merit pay, except for some anticipated improvement in teaching performance that is generally difficult to measure in a 'cause-effect' relationship, nothing changes in the professional roll of the teacher and teacher morale often becomes a chronic problem. Under the 'merit pay' model, teachers are not used to improve curriculum, assist other teachers, develop better ways of monitoring student progress or give leadership in any other instructional improvement endeavors. Some critics of merit pay argue that merit pay actually discourages teachers from helping other teachers become more effective since there is always a limited amount of merit pay to be distributed.

A second type of career ladder emphasizes professional promotion based on evidence of professional growth and development over time. This model tends to be an extension and elaboration of the traditional salary schedule that rewards teachers for additional credits and degrees earned beyond the entry level minimum. Various professional development activities and experiences are identified that are thought to be conducive to more effective teaching performance. Teachers are rewarded

monetarily and by elevation to higher professional status levels as they successfully complete prescribed professional development activities or projects. As teachers advance on the career ladder, they may be expected to give some leadership in providing staff development training to less experienced teachers.

This model is more acceptable to teachers because it is perceived to be more objective and more akin to the traditional salary schedule. There is less pressure on the evaluation process than under merit pay, and it is not difficult to get widespread agreement on the proposition that there is a positive correlation between staff development activities and effective teaching performance. However, hard data to back that assumption is difficult to come by and frequently refutes it. Nevertheless, as a tenant of faith, most teachers and administrators feel comfortable with it. This model has limited utility as a means of using teacher talents and skills to advance the instructional improvement priorities of the school district except in the area of staff development.

A third career ladder model is what is typically called a 'job enlargement' or 'job redesign' model. It is tied to teacher performance to the extent that teachers must demonstrate teaching proficiency based on a performance standard set by the district in order to qualify for consideration for promotion on the career ladder. Teachers must demonstrate teaching skills to some defined level before they are eligible for candidacy in relation to a career ladder position. They then are considered based on their background, skills and knowledge for a given career ladder job description. Career ladder job descriptions are usually tied directly to district-wide and/or school instructional improvement priorities.

We have recommended that DCPS implement a comprehensive career development program that incorporates features of all three models. We have recommended a career ladder with at least three stages or sets of stages that build from 1) an initial entry teacher or induction level to 2) a set of career distinctions based jointly upon professional growth and development activities and performance assessment and which leads then to 3) a final set of job enlargement opportunities. We believe such a model optimizes the best features of each of the predominant models while avoiding the negatives associated with reliance on a singular approach.

Specifically, we favor this synthesized model for several reasons: (1) since teaching proficiency is a prerequisite for advancement, performance is a promotion criterion and the public can be assured that the model rewards excellent teaching; (2) teachers are much more more accepting of differential pay and recognition for different responsibilities than they are of differential pay for performing the same responsibilities - this leads to that situation; (3) job enlargement enables a district

to accelerate progress in its instructional improvement efforts by using needed skills of outstanding teachers; (4) the job enlargement component can be used to move teaching, for those who wish and are well prepared, toward a profession with full year employment and significantly increased earning power; (5) while the synthesized model requires a sound evaluation process that is reliable, valid and credible, the pressure on evaluating teaching performance is not nearly as great as under a strict merit pay plan since many other factors are considered in the promotion process; (6) job enlargement provides opportunities for teachers to advance in responsibility and compensation while also providing opportunities to make significant contributions beyond the classroom without having to give up teaching as the primary professional commitment.

Some job enlargement models favor individual teacher projects designed to increase the effectiveness of the individual teacher. While this has value, we believe that the more promising approach is to design career ladder positions that support and advance district-wide and/or school priorities. Such a tie-in assures that the career ladder does not become "just another program" but rather the primary resource to accomplish most, if not all, the instructional improvement goals of the district.

5. Determine how many levels a career ladder should have, the qualifying and selection criteria for advancement, how the induction system for new teachers is to be integrated into the ladder and options experienced teachers presently in the district will have in relation to the ladder.

We suggest that the task force give consideration to a ladder that has four or five levels. The first level would typically be the induction or provisional level lasting two or three years until a teacher can be considered for tenure. At this level, the provisional teacher should have a support group to give feedback, provide modeling and offer assistance with any problem areas encountered by the provisional teacher. It is during this time that a teacher should either develop a skill level set by the district or be terminated. Only competent teachers should be promoted to the next level which would normally be the traditional tenured teaching position. Developing the next two or three rungs of the ladder will be the creative work of the task force. They should involve additional professional development work, evaluations of performance and undertaking additional responsibilities.

While participation in the ladder's first two levels should be required for all new teachers, participation beyond this level should be voluntary.

Teachers will need frequent reminding that the career ladder provides options. People go into teaching for many different

reasons. Not everyone will aspire to responsibilities beyond the traditional teaching role. There will be outstanding teachers who will not want a longer work year. Those who do not opt to go further for these reasons should not view themselves or be viewed as second class professionals in the district. Some experienced teachers in the district will want to join the career ladder program - others will not. No one should be subjected to external pressure one way or the other. It is a matter of individual choice.

Experienced teachers in the district who aspire to advancement on the career ladder should be expected to meet the qualifying criteria of teaching proficiency established by the district as a part of any new evaluation process. At some point the question will come up as to whether experienced teachers should be required to demonstrate the same standard of teaching proficiency required of provisional teachers prior to promotion to the tenured teaching position. Presumably the new evaluation process will have a more explicit standard for tenure than is now the case and a more systematic procedure for determining whether the standard has been met. Requiring tenured teachers to demonstrate proficiency according to a newly developed standard would be highly controversial. However, tenured teachers who wish to be considered for career ladder positions beyond the traditional tenured teaching position should be expected to meet the qualifying criteria including an explicit standard of teaching proficiency.

In addition, in the career ladder model we recommend, advancement to higher levels would require additional professional development work - which may have already been undertaken i.e. advanced degrees or programs - as well as more intense measures of performance. For example in a program with four or five steps the third step (first above tenured teacher) may require x credits of graduate work in one's subject area, y credits in district designed programs and z score on an evaluation instrument. The next step may require more graduate work and higher scores. These steps (or there may be only one of this type) would base advancement and additional compensation primarily on professional development and performance considerations. The final step could require specialized training in one of several areas such as adult learning, curriculum development or tests and measurement as well as performance scores. This step would qualify a teacher to assume job enlargement roles and further additional compensation would result from performing these roles.

6. Determine the structure of career ladder job enlargement positions, their number and scope, how the positions will be developed and how teachers will be selected.

These are all critical decisions. We have emphasized the need to develop job descriptions around the educational priorities of the district and individual schools. One fundamental question

is whether career ladder positions should be building based, district based or a combination of both. We favor putting some emphasis at the individual school level in accordance with a cooperatively developed needs assessment in each school, but only within the broad context of district priorities and district-wide role definitions. If individual school faculties have an opportunity to identify instructional improvement needs and then have the chance to help write job descriptions to address those needs, we expect they will see greater value in the program and have a stronger sense of ownership of it.

One issue regarding the scope of career ladder responsibilities is whether job descriptions should be limited to responsibilities and tasks related directly to instructional improvement or should include managerial or administrative functions as well. We believe that the scope should be limited to curriculum, teaching skills, student assessment, staff development and mentoring of new teachers. A common criticism of the career ladder concept is that it may result in removing excellent teachers from the classroom and turning them into managers or quasi-managers. This can happen but need not if the job scope is clearly limited to instructional improvement activities.

Another issue is how much a teaching position can be enlarged without undermining the basic professional responsibility of classroom teaching. Career ladder job descriptions must be reasonable, balanced from one position to another and wherever possible, enable teachers to accomplish their career ladder responsibilities during days or times when school is not in session or they do not have classroom responsibilities. Interference with regular teaching schedules should be kept to a minimum. Most excellent, conscientious teachers do not like to be away from their students. They recognize that there is a loss whenever they are. However, this is not to imply that some assignments might not be profitably undertaken during extended periods of absence from classroom duties such as a semester or year's released time. The point is, teachers should not be permanently removed from their basic classroom assignment.

The selection of teachers for career ladder positions is a very sensitive issue, particularly in DCPS where there is a rather widespread perception of cronyism and favoritism in promotion decisions. The selection process must be as objective as possible. As we have suggested, the task force might consider involving teachers in the selection process for job enlargement positions. One district organized a selection team in each school comprised of the principal and two teachers, chosen by the faculty, who were themselves not candidates for any career ladder positions. The team interviewed all the candidates for each position. No selection was made without at least a two-thirds vote of the team and one of the two had to be the principal. There was rarely a complaint of a biased judgment. (This point is elaborated further in item 9.) However, we must be clear that

such a locally based process should be based up on common training and the use of common instruments and selection criteria.

7. Determine how to articulate the incentives and differentiated positions presently available with the new program.

There are elements of job enlargement in the teacher mentor program and in the limited pilot program which uses some department chairpeople to provide instructional leadership (for which they are given time and additional compensation). Moreover, there are limited teacher incentive grants for teacher initiated projects. The task force should learn what it can do from these programs though, for the most part, they are neither extensive nor long standing. It should determine the strengths and weaknesses of each program, how they support instructional improvement, what factors facilitate and impede that support, etc.

None of the current programs appear to be so entrenched that they could not be rather easily dropped, modified or integrated into a comprehensive career ladder program. These programs represent some small beginnings or pilots that can be very instructive to the deliberations of the career ladder task force. Two somewhat different kinds of leadership roles are represented in the mentor and department chair programs. Both are directed toward instructional improvement and are worth careful consideration in developing a comprehensive career ladder model.

8. Develop valid, reliable and equitable personnel evaluation systems.

Analysis of the District of Columbia's Teacher Appraisal Process (TAP) and teachers' opinions of it reveal several problems with the current evaluation system:

- a. The process, as currently implemented, is not a systematic, performance-based personnel evaluation system adequate to support current, necessary decisions (i.e, employment, salary adjustments, certification, etc.) let alone decisions essential to a career ladder/differentiated staffing program (e.g., identification of levels of performance, differentiation between effective and ineffective teaching or other professional behaviors).
- b. Teachers and other district educators seem to lack confidence in the evaluation process, and feel that it is inconsistently administered across the district by persons who are insufficiently trained to evaluate teachers.
- c. Current criteria specified for TAP evaluation of groups other than classroom teachers (librarians, counselors, support services personnel, psychologists) are not sufficient given the job responsibilities of these individuals. (For example,

a media specialist spends time in management of the media center, interactions of several different types with several levels of client, extensive planning and evaluation of center operations and direct instruction of students, but the specified indicators of performance do not adequately cover this range of activities.)

- d. TAP currently utilizes two incongruent approaches to evaluation: a job target/goal setting process and appraisal against a set of predetermined criteria (indicators). The two procedures are incongruent in that there is little indication that they are intergrated in any manner. (Even though observations of specified performance indicators are supposedly conducted, the individual's evaluation rating for the year is apparently tied to the job targets (goals) agreed upon at the beginning of the year. The job targets may or may not have anything to do with effective performance as defined by the District's performance indicators.)
- e. The TAP observation instrument is essentially a rating scale lacking sufficient documentation of behaviors observed. Rating scales are useful only as means of transforming collected data into an evaluative decision. (Research shows that rating scales are not very helpful in generating data for decisions. They have not contributed to the research on effective teaching.)
- f. Some of the criteria (indicators) identified for evaluation are not observable, but there is no evidence that other data collection procedures and instruments are used to systematically collect data about their presence or quality.
- g. Descriptions of evaluator training provided to the consultant team suggest that the training is not sufficient.
- h. Evaluation results across the system appear to be consistently high regardless of teacher experience or other factors. Indeed, extremely high ratings are the rule with very few exceptions. On the face of it, this skewed distribution suggests the evaluation procedures do not provide useful information for decision making.
- i. There is no evidence that teacher ratings are valid; i.e., that students of teachers given a high rating perform any better than students of teachers given low ratings. (TAP does not document the teacher's ability to deliver "best practice" as it is currently defined by the research on effective teaching - or by the DCPS. While a teacher like a doctor cannot be expected to "heal all patients," he/she should be expected to demonstrate best practice in treating them.)
- j. There is no evidence that either the instruments used to

measure performance or the ratings given by evaluators are reliable; i.e., that the instruments measure what they are supposed to measure consistently or that the ratings given are consistent from evaluator to evaluator or from evaluatee to evaluatee of the same evaluator.

As a result of these findings, the consultant team recommends that DCPS commit itself to a series of decisions to improve its teacher evaluation procedures, specifically:

- a. A measurement-based personnel evaluation system demonstrated to be valid, reliable and equitable should be developed. Such a system should:
 - use multiple sources of evidence (e.g., classroom/position observations, teacher interview, student questionnaire responses, teacher portfolio, etc.);
 - use a low inference observation instrument embodying behaviors pertinent to prescribed district indicators and facilitative of appropriate student performance;
 - be capable of identifying levels of professional performance determined to be appropriate to career ladder placement and/or certification;
 - be varied in content and procedure to accommodate the variations in job description and job responsibilities determined to be characteristic of the professional staff to be evaluated.
- b. Development of the evaluation system should be undertaken by a task force including classroom teachers, building and system administrators and measurement/evaluation experts. This task force should:
 - determine the decisions to be made within their charge;
 - determine the procedures for arriving at each decision;
 - study evaluation systems currently in use elsewhere which have attempted to address the issues and problems identified above;
 - develop or have developed the instrumentation and materials determined to be essential;
 - communicate to all professional personnel in District of Columbia schools what is being done and why it is being done at each stage of the process;
 - oversee the field testing of the new evaluation system

and establish standards to be used in the application of evaluation data to career ladder/differentiated staffing decisions.

- c. A training program for data collectors and evaluators should be carefully designed and rigorously implemented. Such a program should include provisions for:
 - Assessment of observer/evaluator reliability in accordance with predetermined standards;
 - regular monitoring of data collectors and evaluators;
 - appropriate retraining when/as required.
- d. Teachers should be involved in the teacher evaluation process as data collectors but not as evaluators. This participation should be undertaken to:
 - provide staff development to selected teachers (congruent with research which demonstrates that teachers trained in low inference observation themselves become better teachers);
 - develop additional instructional resource persons for the school district.
- e. Clear distinctions between evaluation for employment and evaluation for career ladder placement should be established and maintained. However, the evaluation task force may determine that the same instruments and similar procedures can be used in both processes.
- f. The evaluation task force should examine current relationships between performance evaluation results and DCPS certification categories and make recommendations to the administration regarding maintenance of current relationships or desirable modifications.
9. Develop a process for making advancement decisions which includes peers and building principals, using multiple sources of evidence.

At present, selections for job enlargements (building resource teachers, department heads) are not perceived to be uniformly and fairly conducted. Even if this perception is false, it is still the predominant perception among teachers and other educators in the District.

Teachers in the District believe that teachers are better able to provide objective data about classroom performance than are other observers. However, they do not want peers to be responsible for synthesizing available data and rendering the

final judgments which must be made.

As mentioned above, some of the indicators of performance currently identified for measurement and evaluation cannot be observed in the classroom and lend themselves only to high inference judgments unless additional objective instruments and procedures for data gathering and documentation of performance are incorporated into the assessment process.

Obviously, building principals should not be excluded from the decision making process. They are or should be excellent sources of data. They should be trained in all data collection instruments and procedures. They should have input into the selection process procedures.

Finally, there are several key steps in the process for establishing an advancement decision process. They include identification of advancement criteria, identification of appropriate data sources, selection/development of instruments and procedures for data collection, development of procedures for translating collected data into an advancement decision, field testing the process and setting standards for future decisions.

In developing this process and implementing it as day to day practice, many decisions will have to be made. We recommend the following be used as an initial framework for the process to be developed:

- a. Teachers and principals should be selected to participate in:
 - developing job descriptions for each proposed job enlargement;
 - developing application/selection criteria for each proposed job enlargement which are congruent with the stated job description;
 - developing evaluation/selection procedures and data collection instruments;
 - field testing the process;
 - setting standards for advancement decisions.
- b. After a program is approved, teachers who themselves are outstanding performers should be selected to serve as classroom observers/data collectors.
- c. The principal of a candidate for a career ladder position should serve as one source of performance data.
- d. Principals may serve as data collectors. However, professional educators other than principals and full-time

teachers should also be considered as possible data collectors (e.g. substitute or part-time teachers, supervisors and other central office administrators, university faculty and graduate students). NOTE: All persons selected as data collectors must be certified on the basis of extensive district training and demonstrated reliability.

- e. Multiple sources of evidence (data) should be used in the selection process. Among those to be considered for use by the evaluation task force should be candidate interviews, student questionnaires, applicant produced evidence of planning, strategy versatility, measurement/evaluation ability, classroom management ability, professional growth and professional commitment (attendance, responsibilities, teamwork, etc.).
10. Develop a process for monitoring and reviewing career ladder/advancement decisions at the district level.

The current lack of confidence in personnel evaluation and job enlargement decisions and the concern about inconsistency and irregularity in these processes across the district indicate that the success of a career development program will rest, in part, on district efforts to 1) restore and maintain confidence in the objectivity of personnel decisions and 2) ensure fair and equitable treatment of career ladder applicants. Further, the district's commitment to the program will be measured, in part, by central office participation in it. We recommend the following decisions be made to help ensure these objectives are reached:

- a. All selection and evaluation procedures should be standardized across the district and regular monitoring of procedures and results should be conducted by central office personnel.
 - b. A procedure/process for appeal of selection procedures and decisions to district-level administration should be clearly defined and communicated to all professional personnel.
11. Develop procedures to ensure that the career ladder program serves to integrate staff development activities with personnel evaluation.

Analysis of conditions in DCPS as well as consultant experience in other districts indicate needs which should be considered as a basis for several decisions. At present there appears to be little or no relationship (linkage) between personnel evaluation and staff development programs. Further, teachers tend to feel that current staff development offerings do not address their needs. They also report that they have little input into the selection of staff development offerings.

In general, there is little evidence of a conceptual framework for instructional improvement and staff development. A broad, intergrated approach to teacher career development is definitely required. The following decisions would serve to ensure that such an approach is initiated.

- a. Staff development should include a variety of strategies for assisting professional staff to improve performance and grow professionally. At least the following procedures and processes should be integrated into the program: post-observation/post-evaluation feedback, conferencing, modeling/demonstration teaching, classroom/position visitation both inside and outside the district, mentoring, workshops, university courses, attendance at professional conferences.
 - b. Personnel evaluation data should be used to guide/direct individuals into staff development activities, particularly activities offering opportunities for remediation of weakness/needs identified through evaluation.
 - c. Current procedures for assessing teacher/staff needs should be examined and modified as necessary to ensure the opportunity for input by all teachers and professional staff. However, the input should "enlightened"; i.e., it should consider district-wide evaluation data and district goals.
 - d. Attention should be given to the establishment of a comprehensive career development program which provides both career opportunities for professional staff and the skill/knowledge development necessary to each phase.
12. Determine a strategy for implementing a career ladder program.

A career ladder is a major departure from past practice. It will modify some long standing norms in the teaching profession. Many anxieties and concerns will develop in the planning and implementation stages. Several factors will need to be considered including financial resources, the amount of change the district can cope with at a given time, the extent of readiness in the district and the leadership available at the district and school level to implement a major change.

District-wide implementation of a career ladder will require a significant investment of new money. Whether a model can be developed that will win sufficient support at the outset from school board members, administrators, teachers, D.C. council members, and the Congress to generate the needed resources for district-wide implementation all at one time is speculative. There will be skeptics and competing claims on new resources. Many teachers, fearful of the unknown, will advocate safer alternatives such as reducing class size or giving teachers

sizable across the board increases to make the district more competitive with surrounding districts. Policy makers will want assurances that the career ladder rewards will really go to the best teachers and that the program will in fact improve student achievement. There can be no absolute guarantees. Even with the best of planning, there are risks in such a major undertaking.

Two alternatives to full implementation are a phased implementation over two to four years or one or more pilot programs to test whatever model(s) the task force develops. One of these two alternatives may prove to be the most feasible approach though district-wide implementation should be carefully considered. If a career ladder model is developed that seems to have considerable promise for upgrading teaching and improving instruction in DCPS, the district may want to go for full implementation with a backup position of phased implementation. There is something to be said for an entire district focusing on a major reform effort. However, the leadership and commitment of the Board of Education and the superintendent would have to be very strong and persistent to launch a career ladder district wide.

Again, it should be stressed that each of the points stipulated within each area discussed above has been presented in the form of an affirmative decision. The consultant team believes that the collective decisions presented within each discussion will best support the establishment of a comprehensive career development program within the District of Columbia Public Schools. However, the administration and/or Board of Education should fully consider each decision and be prepared to reject or modify it or to implement an alternative decision when that is in the best interest of DCPS; hence, our use of the term "decision points."

APPENDIX A

BRIEFING PAPER FOR CAREER LADDER CONVENING PROCESS

**PROCEDURES AND OBJECTIVES FOR CONVENING
NATIONAL EXPERTS IN RESEARCH AND
PRACTICE TO REVIEW THE POTENTIAL
IMPLEMENTATION OF A CAREER LADDER/
DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING PROGRAM IN THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS.**

Michael Kane, Chairman

May 15, 1987

**PROCEDURES AND OBJECTIVES FOR CONVENING NATIONAL EXPERTS
IN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE TO REVIEW THE POTENTIAL
IMPLEMENTATION OF A CAREER LADDER/DIFFERENTIATED
STAFFING PROGRAM IN THE D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS.**

INTRODUCTION

During mid July a small, diverse group of educational professionals will engage in three days of interaction with each other and with officials and staff of the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). These "external" professionals have in common long-term experience with matters related to the development and enhancement of educational personnel and recent experience with career ladder/differentiated staffing programs and attendant issues such as personnel evaluation, program design, school organization and structure, etc. These professionals are being asked to join DCPS officials in what is known as a "convening process" in order to aid the DC officials in determining whether and if so how and in what form a career ladder/differentiated program might help the district attain its long-term goals regarding enhancement of its instructional staff including, among others, issues of quality, role and retention. This paper is intended as a guide to this convening process for both the external professionals as well as the "internal" professionals they will engage and who will utilize the outcomes of the process.

The paper is in two parts. First, a review of the convening process will be presented. This will encompass both generic aspects of the process as well as specifics relevant to the case at hand. Second, a brief overview of the substantive issues involved and the objectives of this specific endeavor will be reviewed. Recognizing that this paper will be utilized primarily by either district policy makers with enormous demands on their time or by the convening professionals with substantial experience with the issues, the paper seeks parsimony rather than exhaustiveness. It is intended as a briefing paper. Unanswered issues and questions should be directed with dispatch to the author. Refinements of objectives and goals will be an agenda item during the initial session in the District. The paper will be developed iteratively between the author and district staff therefore successive drafts will see increases in specificity of the operational plan. Early drafts will be used to stimulate the development of the complete plan. This is the fourth draft and is now being shared widely with DCPS staff and the convening consultants.

THE CONVENING PROCESS - BACKGROUND

The concept of the convening process grew out of the work of Norman Gold and his colleagues in the evaluation research group of the former National Institute of Education during the early 1980's. Its purpose was to bring together some of the rigor and formality of the technology of educational program evaluation with the real world of educational policy making. In a sense, it can be seen as a merging of insights on evaluation with insights on knowledge utilization. Put simply, the required niceties and rigors of evaluation research rarely meet the real world demands on policy makers for timely decisions informed by other sets of data beyond the "scientific." The convening process adapts to that reality by bringing greater structure and discipline to the process of collegial consultation which is the most common form of "data gathering" in which many policy makers engage. In the words of Mr. Gold:

"For inquiries limited both in terms of substance and time, a simple and focused process is needed. Since the problems a school system may encounter are not likely to be unique, experience exists for both facing and dealing with these problems. To gain this knowledge, one needs to identify colleagues who have been in similar circumstances and determine what worked and didn't work for them. Administrators and other decision makers frequently call on trusted colleagues or others they may have heard about for advice. The current interest in networks, professional meetings and other forms of collegial interchange reflects this purpose. This system appears to be quite influential in informing local decision makers. No set of individuals has greater credibility in a school system than other school people.

"The Convening Activity, capitalizes on this natural system of support, attempting to make it more useful and reliable. The process employed to accomplish this is designed to formalize the use of collegial consultation as an assessment and problem solving tool. The formalization is designed to facilitate: (1) access to relevant colleagues, (2) opportunities for problem identification and (3) the process for problem solution.

"This process is intended to bring together people who are representative of the range of experience and insight available in schools concerning the problem being addressed. The commitment to a set of achievable objectives for the consultation, augmented by the analysis of existing data and the on-site review, appreciably facilitates problem identification. Finally, employing a group process for problem solution is intended to yield recommendations more in line with a district's needs than a series of individual consultations might bring."

AN OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE CAREER LADDER CONVENING PROCESS

The full scope of activities surrounding a convening event comprise five major elements or tasks. These include

1. Determining a need for the process and developing its operational plan;
2. Collecting descriptive and analytic information including a) problem specification, b) identification of locations where similar problems have been engaged, c) setting of objectives for the process and d) orienting and informing participants;

3. Identifying and seeking agreement from the "external" colleagues who will participate;
4. Conducting convening activities including a) prior off-site review of materials, specification of questions and development of preliminary recommendations and b) on-site activities including the orientation session, the on-site review and interaction and on-site development of findings and recommendations; and
5. The presentation of results including the development of the group's report and its presentation to the district.

The balance of this section will review each of these tasks as they pertain to this specific convening event. In this section substantive information will be kept to the minimum necessary for understanding the process. The following section will describe in greater depth the substantive issues to be engaged.

Task 1 Determining a Need for the Process and Developing its Operational Plan.

The District of Columbia Public Schools is unique in that its regular fiscal budget, and therefore its programs, are subject to the approval of the US Congress in addition to the DC City Council and Mayor. In 1983 Congress charged the district with developing a "balanced and comprehensive system which will enhance the concepts of merit pay and exemplary teacher recognition . . . (in order) to recognize outstanding teachers through both monetary and professional incentives." Shortly thereafter the superintendent appointed a task force to develop a plan that

1. Improves the quality of the teaching environment;
2. Provides recognition and incentives for professional self development of teachers; and
3. Enhances the District's ability to attract and retain highly qualified teachers.

The task force commissioned several pieces of research which culminated in a report "Study of Teacher Incentives in the District of Columbia Public Schools."

That report identified two somewhat conflicting themes within the district; a) the strong resistance of instructional staff to the idea of "merit pay" and b) the relative lack of incentives and differentiated career structure in the current staff organization patterns of the District.

Since the report was issued, several related activities and programs have been developed and implemented such as an intern mentor program and a department chair program, however no comprehensive career ladder, differentiated staffing or merit pay program has yet been attempted. While the DCPS Board accepted the task force report, including the career ladder concept, in principal, the District adopted a conscious strategy of first working to develop what might eventually become relevant elements of a career ladder program and then addressing the possibility of a comprehensive program. There is significant interest at top levels of the District in improving the professional

role of teachers and in enhancing the involvement of teachers in professional aspects of the functioning of schools. This interest, together with the long standing commitment to the issue of career ladders, raises the question whether initiating the development of a district-wide career ladder/differentiated staffing program would facilitate such a shift in the role responsibilities of some or even all teachers and if so, how would one go about implementing such a program.

The office with responsibility for developing a formal organizational response to this question is the Office of Incentive Programs. The office is directed by Joan Brown who was also special assistant to the superintendent for the study of merit pay for teachers when the task force report was prepared. Ms. Brown has asked the Division of Quality Assurance and Management Planning, directed by David Huie, to assist her office in responding to the presenting issue. Mr. Huie has turned to Norman Gold of his staff who is currently responsible for the Office of Research and Evaluation and was the original developer of the convening process to take responsibility for applying the convening model to this question as a portion of the District's response. Mr. Gold is assisted in this by Dennis Holmes, professor of educational policy at George Washington University and currently a part-time consultant to the District schools. Messrs. Gold and Holmes have asked Mr. Michael Kane, president of the Citizens' Council on Education in Florida, to chair the convening process. Mr. Kane was formerly an associate and assistant director of NIE with responsibility for the Institute's knowledge utilization research and programs. He is currently engaged in several teacher development initiatives including serving as chairman of the Professional Teacher Career Development Council in Florida, which is appointed by the Governor and charged with overseeing the development of Florida's career ladder program. The balance of the section describes the operational plan for the convening event.

Task 2 Collecting Descriptive and Analytic Information

Subtask A Problem Identification

Earlier statements have described the general problem area this process is to engage. The substantive section of this briefing paper will specify the problem in greater detail along with objectives for the process. Here we will briefly describe the process for specifying the problem statement.

Ms. Brown and Messrs. Gold, Huie, Holmes and Kane have had several general discussions of the professional development issues faced by the District. These discussions have been amplified by a review of the 1984 task force report. This briefing paper, which includes a problem statement, was written by Mr. Kane as a synthesis of discussions held to date. This draft has been reviewed by DCPS staff including the superintendent and the problem statement has been refined to incorporate their additional input. The colleague consultants will receive this draft.

Subtask B Identification of Locations Where Similar Problems Have Been Engaged.

Career ladder programs have become an increasing topic of attention since the April 1983 report of the Commission on Excellence in Education which once again raised the issue of merit pay for school teachers to public visibility. Career ladder programs

were originally put forward as an alternative to merit pay but early proposals were viewed by merit pay proponents as representing little different from the career ladder implicit in time and degree based salary schedules. Latter proposals for more performance based ladders were viewed by teachers as merit pay in disguise. With the emphasis on restructuring the teaching profession, which is found in the reports of the Carnegie Forum, National Governors Association and Holmes Group, career ladder proposals are being viewed in a new light. Many school districts are therefore only just beginning to develop experience with career ladders for dealing with similar problems to those being confronted by the DCPS.

In light of this, a search has been conducted for consultants who could bring the full range of necessary experience to the District's problem. The search began with a review of individuals Mr. Kane has known during his three plus years of involvement with a variety of career ladder related issues in Florida and nationally. That was facilitated by his having recently attended a Southern Regional Educational Board Conference on career ladders. Using a snowball sampling approach, Mr. Kane was able to expand the universe of career ladder experienced professionals of whom he was directly aware to some 60 plus individuals representing 16 states and several school districts.

Since experience with professional development oriented career ladders is relatively recent, the primary criterion established for selecting consultants was to attempt to develop a group which was diversified across as many professional, experiential and personal characteristics as possible. It was felt that this diversity would best guarantee against any particular bias or predisposition unduly influencing the advice to be given to the DCPS in this highly developmental area. Therefore, while a search was made for other school systems which have engaged similar problems, the selection process clearly went beyond that singular variable to include balance across those of geographic area of experience, base of professional experience (i.e., district, state department, university, etc.) orientation to career ladders and teacher evaluation, sex, race, etc.

Subtask C Setting Objectives

The setting of objectives followed the same process described for Subtask A, problem identification. The convening process is more formal than day-to-day collegial consultation. This formalization provides structure which improves the usefulness and reliability of the consultation. For that reason (i.e., to maximize the probability that the process will be productive) the objectives are being specified iteratively early in the process and will again be a subject of review in the initial meeting of the consultants on-site. Every attempt has been made to keep the objectives realistic and to deal with both problem clarification and problem solving issues.

Subtask D Orientation and Information Phases

It is essential that in the Orientation and Information Phase the consultants become as informed about the District and its issues as possible. Knowledge about the current state of the District in dealing with the problem to be addressed is essential to the analysis of the consultants. The orientation and information phase has two components, one that precedes the actual convening of collegial consultants, and one that commences at the time of convening.

The Orientation and Information Phase will commence after the objectives and the general strategy for achieving those objectives have been agreed upon. It will be the responsibility of the chairman, with the cooperation of DCPS, to supply the convening group with a full-range of input on:

1. The problem as the District perceives it;
2. The range of differences in perception of the problem;
3. Alternatives already attempted to deal with the issue;
4. Description of the current system and state of implementation; and
5. Current thinking on what to do about the problem.

These issues should guide the group's review of documents before their arrival on-site.

The group chairman will work with DCPS personnel in compiling information for the selected collegial consultants. This information is critical for the adequate preparation of consultants. The more the consultants know about the history of the problem and efforts to deal with it by DCPS, the more prepared they will be when providing their analysis and consultation. At the present time it is anticipated the consultants will receive copies of the following documents:

1. A Study of Teacher Incentives for the District of Columbia Public Schools
- Technical Report and Summary Report
2. Comprehensive Education Plan 1986-1987
3. Data Resource Book 1985-1986
4. The Report (Superintendent's Report to the BOE) 1984-1985
1985-1986
5. Student Membership Report-3/5/87
6. Student Progress Plan Gr. 1-6 1985-1986 2nd Semester
7. The Key - A Professional Journal for DCPS Teachers
Winter 1986, Spring 1986, Winter 1987
8. Brochures on: Mentor Program, Teacher Certification, New Teacher Orientation, Department Chair Program

This information will not be synthesized. The consultants will be asked to spend 1 to 1-1/2 days reviewing it prior to arrival in Washington. As experienced professionals, they will know how to give the items included varying levels of intensity of review. Clearly the task force report on teacher incentives should be read in its entirety. Other materials with the exception of the Comprehensive Education Plan 1986-1987 should receive a more cursory review.

In addition to working with district officials to develop this reading list, the group chairman will work with district staff to identify those individuals who should be interviewed on-site by the consultants. We anticipate both this identification process and the actual interviews will involve personnel from the superintendent to individual teachers.

Task 3 Identifying and Securing Agreement from the "External" Colleagues Who Will Participate

As discussed under Task 2 Subtask B above, the goal in identifying and selecting colleagues for the consultation was to develop a pool of candidates which included those with experience in districts who had developed career ladders to address issues being confronted by the DCPS as well as others who were involved in a broader array of career ladder related activities, settings and issues. As an outcome of the process previously discussed, Mr. Kane contacted approximately 15 colleagues who taken together met this criterion. He has secured agreements from the following to work with DCPS on its convening event.

Mr. John Bennion, Superintendent of Schools, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Mr. Bennion has developed career ladder plans in both Provo and Salt Lake City, Utah. Both these plans ultimately serve differentiated staffing/professional development ends.

Mr. Homer Coker, Adjunct Professor, Georgia State University

Mr. Coker has served at all levels of local education activity from teacher to superintendent. He has headed a group of professionals searching for improved methods of teacher evaluation. He is currently working with both state and school districts in developing teacher incentive and evaluation plans.

Mr. Russell French, Executive Director, Interim Certification Commission

A professor of curriculum and instruction, Mr. French has been "on loan" since April 1983 to the Office of the Governor and the Tennessee Department of Education to develop and implement its career ladder program. He also consults actively with several other states and school districts in developing career ladder programs.

Mr. Thomas Jackson, Dean, College of Education, Florida A&M University

As Dean of a College of Education in an historically black institution, Mr. Jackson is in a unique position to observe the changes in the supply of teachers available to school districts such as DCPS.

Ms. Kay Mitchell, Director, Career Development Office, Charlotte-Mecklenberg Schools

Ms. Mitchell is responsible for the development and implementation of Charlotte-Mecklenberg's nationally known professional development/career ladder initiative.

Mr. Andrew Robinson, Director, Florida Institute of Education

Mr. Robinson has served for many years as an Education School Dean in an emerging urban university. It is highly likely that such schools will be a major supplier of teachers to districts such as DCPS in the future. He also serves as a member of Florida's Career Ladder Oversight Council.

Ms. Loretta Webb, Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum and Staff Development, Fairfax County, Virginia School District

A former DCPS teacher, Ms. Webb has served in numerous state and local school district positions in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Among her other current duties, Ms. Webb is responsible for providing training for all personnel with leadership responsibilities in Fairfax County's Teacher Performance Evaluation Program.

Ms. Gloria Williams, Consultant, Bureau of Professional Development, Connecticut Department of Education.

Ms. Williams has come to the Connecticut DOE with over 20 years of experience in professional development matters. She is currently responsible for implementing the pilot teacher initiatives program in Connecticut.

This group is exceptionally well balanced across the several dimensions previously specified. We are quite pleased these professionals have agreed to serve on this project and feel they will render invaluable advice and assistance to the school district.

Task 4 Convening Activities

Subtask A Preliminary On-Site Activities

The actual time available to collegial consultants is limited. We have estimated seven days per consultant for all activities. Of the seven days up to two will be spent in preparation for the site visit. The separate activities to be conducted during this phase can be broadly described as follows.

1. Review of Orientation and Synthesis Reports

The materials described above as well as this briefing paper will be provided to the consultants well in advance of their visit. This information consists of significant and/or relevant documents to enable the consultants to gain as much insight in as short a period of time as possible.

2. Specification of Questions

As a result of their review of written materials, consultants will be able to specify a set of questions they would like to address during their on-site interviews. These questions will be used to broaden the understanding of the consultants in their effort to help identify problems and offer suggestions for their solution. Specification of at least some questions in advance will help DCPS officials arrange interviews with the most knowledgeable school people. It is currently planned to interview groups of individuals representing teachers, principals, the superintendent's council, area superintendents, the community, the local universities preparing teachers and the local teachers union. Therefore, the chairman will solicit consultant questions for each of these groups prior to the time to be spent on-site.

3. Preliminary Attempt at Analysis and Recommendations

Prior to coming on-site, it will be useful for consultants to go through an exercise for their own edification. This will consist of writing down preliminary recommendations based upon what was known at that point. This exercise will have two purposes. The first is to stimulate preliminary thinking about and organizing of information much of which should come from the individual consultants' experiences, the research data base and the limited information on the DCPS case. The second is to make explicit one's own position and set of biases which will be brought to the process.

Subtask B Convening the Group On-Site

The involved process for selecting collegial consultants, the setting of group problem solving objectives, and the provision of orientation and analytic information is all preparation for convening the group on-site. The group activities on-site will be conducted in three parts: (1) an orientation session; (2) an on-site review; (3) a structured group process leading to specific problem solving recommendations and a final discussion with relevant DCPS officials to present the preliminary findings and recommendations.

1. Orientation Session

The Orientation Session will occur on the afternoon and evening prior to the first full day. Its purpose is to allow conveners to meet one another and DCPS personnel. Plans will be gone over and the entire agenda along with logistics fully discussed.

2. The On-Site Review - Day 1

The purpose of the on-site review is to interview central actors responsible for solving the particular problems of the DCPS, as well as others in the system affected by the specific problems under consideration. These interviews must, of necessity, be intense and quite productive. The goal of this face-to-face interaction is to gain as much knowledge as possible directly from informants concerning the nature of the problem. This day is viewed as an extension of the orientation and information phase, therefore, the same general questions which guided the review of documents can guide this latter set of on-site information gathering activities.

The interviews will take place in one day. The interviewers already will have considerable information concerning the problem being addressed from the analytic reports they have received and studied. They should have in mind exactly what they need from these interviews to complete their review. If the number of individuals or groups to be interviewed is too great for the time allotted, members of the convening group will split and conduct separate interviews. At the end of the day each interviewer will synthesize his or her notes and prepare general impressions. After this an evening meeting will be held to go over the interviews

so that all members are familiar with the information gained from each session. In addition, this evening session will be used to develop tentative recommendations regarding actions to be taken by the DCPS.

3. The On-Site Convening Session - Day 2

The Convening Session itself will last one day and consist of two primary areas of discussion: (1) findings of the panel members, and (2) recommendations for the District. The product of the session will be an extensive outline of a report on findings and recommendations. The goal of the group session is to determine the group's collective findings and recommendations. The report is to reflect the sentiments of the group, not its individual members. Therefore, there will be a single group report, as opposed to individual members' statements. The group session will specify the outline of that report and writing assignments. During a part of this session the group will work individually or in smaller groups to develop an expanded outline of the report.

Though the report does not — and probably should not — present only one analysis or a single recommendation, the group will be required to reach consensus in support of the position they propose. This process of reaching agreement is intended to produce a more thoughtful, integrated and practical set of recommendations than could be obtained by any member individually. Positions presented by members can be challenged, modified or discarded in favor of positions the group decides are more useful for the District's needs. The process is designed to level off consultation from "try my way" to the adoption or adaptation of the group's experience.

When the convening consultants have an outline of their report and recommendations prepared, they will have an "exit interview" with the team of concerned District officials. At this interview the preliminary findings and recommendations will be presented. The group will discuss DCPS reactions and any necessary changes in the outline will be incorporated (or plans for their incorporation will be made) and the group will depart.

Task 5 The Presentation of Results

Once the group position has been formulated and outlined, the process of informing the school district will begin. The presentation of findings will be in two parts. As indicated above, the first will consist of an exit interview with appropriate school officials. This presentation will be, of course, preliminary. Its objective will be to present the group findings and recommendations as they are currently formulated. This discussion will also give receiving school officials the opportunity to ask questions and to react generally. Their feedback will be valuable for the development of the final report.

The second part, the draft final report, will be delivered to the school district within thirty working days from the exit interview. This time line will allow the chairman to receive the individual writing assignments and to synthesize them into a brief, focused paper on findings and recommendations and to circulate it for review and comments to both the members and the district. If any member feels the report should make a statement not endorsed by the group, she or he may wish to write a minority position to be included in the final document.

OPERATIONAL PLAN Time and Task Summary

TASKS	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
Task I - Conceptualization						
a) Conceptual Paper and Operating Plan						
b) Consultation/Review						
Task II - Developing Orientation and Analytic Information						
a) Collecting Information						
b) Problem Identification						
c) Criteria for Consultant Selection						
d) Preliminary Development of Objectives						
e) Identification of Orientation Materials						
Task III - Identification of Sites and Consultants						
a) Identification of Sites						
b) Acquisition of Consultants						
c) Finalizing Objectives for Convening Process						
Task IV - Convening Activities						
a) Material Review						
b) On-Site Activities						
Task V - Final Report						
a) Preparation						
b) Review						

MILESTONES

Share briefing paper and materials with consultants	June 5
Teleconference to review paper and process	June 18
Draft questions for interviewees received from consultants	June 22
Teleconference to review question frameworks to help interviewees prepare	July 1
Convening Event	July 13, 14, 15
Report writing assignment due to chairman from consultants	August 1
Draft final report due District and consultants for review	August 15
Final report due District	September 1

BACKGROUND, STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE CONVENING PROCESS

BACKGROUND

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is a large urban school system serving a student population of about 85,000 in nearly 200 separate facilities. Students are predominantly black (96%) and lower income (51% are eligible for free and reduced price meals). The teacher population of 6,062 is primarily black, highly experienced and highly educated. The District's annual operating budget is \$430,565,000. Per pupil expenditure during the 1986-1987 school year was \$4,297 and average teacher salary was \$33,797. DCPS is unique in that the regular fiscal budget, and therefore its programs, are subject to the approval of the US Congress and the President in addition to the DC City Council and Mayor.

The core of the school system's instructional program is its Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). The program was initiated in 1976, in response to concern about declines in student achievement. CBC is a skills mastery program geared to individual differences in learning style and rate of growth. The primary goal is to ensure that students acquire the skills and competencies necessary for successful functioning in adult roles.

During the school year 1980-1981, the D.C. Public Schools put into effect a comprehensive plan for monitoring student progress. The Student Progress Plan (SPP) is an integral part of the school system's Competency Based Curriculum. The primary purpose of SPP is to ensure students have acquired a satisfactory skills level before they are assigned to the next higher grade. The plan divides each traditional grade, 1 through 6, into two grade levels, A and B. Promotion and retention decisions are made at the end of each semester (January and June) of each school year. Currently, students in grades 1 through 6 are promoted if they have mastered at least 70% of skills, including all critical skills, required for their grade level in both reading and in mathematics. Students who have mastered the required skills in only one of these areas are promoted with transitional instructional status. Special instruction is then provided in the deficient subject area. Students whose skills mastery falls below the required level in both subject areas are retained.

The instructional programs in the junior high schools and high schools are characterized by an extension of the philosophy which guides the elementary school programs. A competency based curriculum has been implemented in grades 7-9. Next year this program will be extended to grades 10 and 11. This curriculum is complemented by a student tracking system which measures accomplishments in the basic skills and requires the provision of remediation programs for those students deficient in these realms.

In addition to this joint curriculum and student tracking program the Comprehensive Secondary School Improvement Initiative requires the secondary schools to identify their needs and goals (in objectively measurable areas such as attendance, instructional remediation programs, school climate, etc.) and implement specific efforts to achieve these goals. Schools are monitored according to their ability to deliver on their objectives.

Student performance in the elementary grades exceeds the national norm (CTBS Total Battery 60th percentile in grade 3 and 55th percentile in grade 6). However, grades 8 and 9 scores are slightly below national norms (46th and 47th percentile respectively). By grade 11, average scores have fallen to the 31st percentile level. An analysis of student cohorts indicates that respective national ranks fall as the cohort moves through the progressive years of schooling. (See pages 39-41 Comprehensive Education Plan.)

As a part of its ongoing program to improve the quality of instruction in District schools, and in response to the Congressional "merit pay" mandate described above, the DCPS conducted a study of teacher incentives during the 1983-1984 school year. The study was intended to "provide a comprehensive data base about teachers and teaching policies and conditions in the DC Public Schools." The convening consultants will have this highly competent study as background material and are expected to review it in its entirety, therefore, it will not be reviewed extensively here. Essentially the study task force found:

- * 75% of DC teachers will be either eligible to retire or will have actually retired by about 1993 -thus creating a significant opportunity to affect teacher quality through recruitment selection and induction policies.
- * DC teacher salaries seem to be competitive with other school districts but not with other occupations prospective teachers might also consider entering.
- * DCPS appears to be lacking in well developed mechanisms to provide supervision and assistance to new teachers during the years the highest attrition rates from the profession are found.
- * DC teachers do not have many opportunities to assume differentiated roles or responsibilities for additional pay.
- * DC teachers tend to be supportive of existing (but minimal) awards programs and desirous of additional opportunities for extra pay and responsibility as long as it's not merit pay.

Accordingly, the Task Force recommended:

- * Creation of a mentor teacher program to assist in the induction of new teachers to full-time professional practice.
- * Expansion of teacher incentive programs to provide opportunities for recognition and the dissemination of effective practices.
- * Development of a school incentive award program to recognize outstanding school programs.

- Long range planning for a more comprehensive career ladder for teachers. This career ladder would link major salary increases to performance based career advancement and would restructure induction and promotion practices.

Since the report was issued a mentor teacher program and a department chair program has been initiated (description in brochures included in consultant review materials). A teacher awards program has been expanded through several diverse activities and a school incentives award program is under consideration.

No comprehensive career ladder, differentiated staffing or merit pay program has yet been attempted. While the DCPS Board accepted the task force report, including the career ladder concept, in principal, the District adopted a conscious strategy of first working to develop what might eventually become relevant elements of a career ladder program and then addressing the possibility of a comprehensive program. There is significant interest at top levels of the District in improving the professional role of teachers and in enhancing the involvement of teachers in professional aspects of the functioning of schools. This interest, together with the long standing commitment to the issue of career ladders, raises the question whether initiating the development of a district-wide career ladder/differentiated staffing program would facilitate such a shift in the role responsibilities of some or even all teachers and if so, how would one go about implementing such a program.

The convening process is to be the major career ladder planning event conducted since the report was issued. It is intended to "set the stage" for the District's formal consideration of the development of such a program.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It has been three years since the task force report on teacher incentives was completed. Several valuable responses have already been made by DCPS. At the same time much additional thinking and experience has been gained by many in the other 29 states which have been experimenting with teacher incentive programs.

Therefore, the basic question being put to the conveners is: Should the District develop a comprehensive career ladder/differentiated staffing program as a means to address several interrelated issues faced by the District, including the identified need or desire to a) induct large numbers of new teachers in the coming 15 years, b) provide additional recognition and professional opportunity for experienced teachers, as well as salary opportunity, as a means of retaining them in the system, c) demonstrate that higher levels of role opportunity and compensation are available within the profession to those young people choosing a career or considering leaving teaching after a few years of experience, and d) enhance the professional role opportunities within teaching through the increased involvement in school site educational decision making a differentiated staffing program necessarily implies; and if so, how should the District approach program design: with what components, resource requirements including cost implications, implementation schedules, levels of involvement of various actors, awareness of likely problems, realistic expectations, policy adjustments, etc. If it is not recommended that a career ladder program be developed what should the District do concerning the programs currently seen as related to a career ladder initiative and how should it respond to the professionalization issues.

There are, then, operational as well as conceptual issues incorporated in this question. The conceptual involve whether, and if so in what form, a career ladder program is the answer to some very real problems of attracting and retaining high quality personnel the District expects to face shortly; and if not what should be done. The operational issues involve those aspects of program implementation faced when a program moves beyond its conceptual design to actual implementation: problems of stakeholder buy-in, participant identification procedures, time and schedule for role performance, training of staff and resource availability.

A. Conceptual Issues

Goal clarity and design congruity. The chief conceptual issue for the District is being clear about what goals are to be met by the program and configuring its design and scope accordingly. A career ladder could be configured to serve primarily a district's need for a) teacher induction, b) broad salary enhancements, c) narrow salary enhancements, d) spreading school site leadership roles to the teaching population, or e) some combination of these. The conveners will be expected to develop judgments about the actual personnel situation(s) being faced by the DCPS as well as the probability of a career ladder program successfully addressing that situation(s).

Once a group judgment is reached concerning the appropriateness of the goals for the District to hold for any recommended program action, the group will be expected to develop a set of broad design recommendations, including but not limited to: number of levels to be involved, role responsibilities at each level, rewards to associate with level attainment, criteria for advancement through levels, etc. These design specifications will lead to a set of operational issues the District must consider.

B. Operational Issues

Stakeholder involvement. An issue that may require consideration, even in advance of the actual convening event, concerns stakeholder involvement. It's hard to imagine any group of professionals in the District that are not impacted by the consideration of a career ladder program. Central office personnel are charged with identifying and resolving district level problems and with obtaining the necessary resources for their resolution. Teachers have a significant stake in any program designed to impact their role and its reward structure. Building level administrators must be involved in the development of any program that could potentially alter the way the business of schooling is conducted.

District leadership must determine, now, the level of involvement these stakeholders are to have as sources of data during the convening process and their level of involvement in the actual implementation process should it occur. To some degree this decision is a function of past practice. However, rarely will program considerations so broadly involve such fundamental issues as potentially who should be involved in hiring, evaluation and promotion decisions. Consideration must be given today to stakeholder issues.

Beyond the preliminary involvement of stakeholders, the convening group must recommend means and levels of stakeholders' involvement throughout the entire implementation of any program recommended.

Evaluation procedures Whenever a personnel structure which requires decisions about advancement is put in place, the criteria for making those decisions must be specified. Advancement decisions in the type of career ladder programs currently being implemented in various state and school districts are quite complex. Simple experience and degree requirements will not satisfy public concern that their additional resources are flowing to the "best" or "most suitable" personnel for the roles required.

Current career ladder programs utilize a range of data based inputs in the decision process including: a) subject matter knowledge tests, b) pedagogical knowledge tests, c) low inference observation of performance, d) high inference rating schemes, e) peer questionnaires, f) supervisor questionnaires. There is probably no single element of a career ladder program that can lead to greater controversy surrounding the program than the evaluation issue. The conveners will be expected to draw upon their broad experience in this realm and to make clear recommendations to the District.

Staff training. Once a decision is made concerning the evaluation criteria for advancement through a career ladder, there will be a requirement to train those who must utilize materials to measure compliance with those criteria. This will range from central personnel who score, aggregate and report the various data collection modalities as well as those who must utilize them in the field. Who this field personnel will be is to some degree a political decision, to some degree a substantive issue and to some other degree a pragmatic one resulting from issues of fiscal, human and time resources. Regardless, training will likely be required and the conveners will be expected to share their insights and experience on this dimension in the form of recommendations.

Role Opportunity. It is highly unlikely that the roles to be performed by personnel advancing on a career ladder are not now being performed somewhere and to some degree in the DCPS. To the degree this is a fact some adjustments in current role configurations are likely. Again politics and pragmatism will be a factor. This can be approached as a zero sum game or as a non-zero sum game. The ultimate success of a career ladder in achieving a set of District goals will depend to a very great degree upon how realistically the factor of role opportunity is taken into consideration in role design. It is unfortunate, yet likely, that this area is one in which we, as an educational enterprise, have the least experience. The conveners will be expected to extrapolate from their past as well as current experience in these matters.

Resource requirements. When issues of career ladder structure, anticipated levels of participation, levels of reward, role responsibility and implied released time, required staff training and development and other cost issues are addressed an estimate of that range of costs facing the District can be provided. At this point it is anticipated that all those issues will be addressed during the convening event to a sufficient level of specificity that some preliminary expected cost ranges can be provided DCPS.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this convening event derive directly from the discussion above. Simply put, they are to consider and report to the DCPS the collective judgment of the colleague group concerning:

1. Whether and if so in what form a career ladder/differentiated staffing program or some alternative set of actions can increase the District's effectiveness in dealing with a range of possible personnel problems it faces and subsequent goals it must establish to continue providing an effective educational program to its clients. This is to include a specification of those problems, goals necessary to resolve them and the role and design of such a program in addressing these.
2. How the district should address the range of operational issues the implementation of a career ladder/differentiated staffing program or some other initiative must confront including stakeholder involvement, evaluation procedures, staff training, role opportunity, resource requirements and any others subsequently identified.

There are a host of related questions which must be addressed to meet these objectives. Some of these are addressed elsewhere in this paper, some are requested from the conveners themselves and some have already been posed by district staff. Those latter questions follow and conclude this paper. Conveners are asked to supply additional general questions to the chair by June 22, 1987. They are also expected to supply specific questions to be asked of DCPS related interviewees by the same date.

DCPS ISSUE AREAS AND QUESTIONS

1. What are the perceptions of key stakeholders in DCPS regarding needs, problems, circumstances that might be addressed by a differentiated staffing/career ladder program?
 - a. To what extent will stakeholder groups (i.e., teachers, principals, central office administrative staff, board members) support a career ladder system? and under what circumstances or conditions will they support it?
 - b. How do these stakeholder groups view the objectives of a career ladder? and to what extent is there consensus among these groups regarding the fundamental objectives of such a program?
2. What has been the experience of local school districts and states with regard to implementing career ladder system?
 - a. What are the incentives and benefits for putting such a system in place, especially for an urban school system? What are the disincentives?
 - b. What conditions or context(s) appear to be necessary to support a career ladder system?
 - c. What are the key steps to be taken to examine whether a career ladder system can and/or should be put into place in DCPS?
 - d. What appear to be the most effective and efficient strategies for planning the implementation of a career ladder system?
 - e. What stages of implementation can DCPS expect to experience in putting such a system in place? How can these stages be monitored?
 - f. What management structure is recommended, including the placement of such a program within the existing DCPS management structure, roles, policies needed, and the timelines within which the program would be implemented.
3. What are the recommended components of a career ladder system for DCPS?
 - a. To what extent do the existing structures (mentor teacher roles, grade-level and department chairpersons) already operating in the system serve as a foundation for a career ladder system?

- b. What are the recommended positions or roles for the career ladder structure for DCPS?
 - c. What are the recommended processes that DCPS should use to select and evaluate individuals for positions on the ladder?
4. What are the recommended policy changes needed to support the implementation of a career ladder system in DCPS?
- a. What roles will teachers play in selecting and evaluating individuals for positions on the ladder?
 - b. What are the recommended changes in certification and tenure policies?
5. What specific recommendations are offered for planning, implementing, and monitoring the installation of a career ladder program in DCPS? Given the experience of other school systems and the unique context of DCPS, how, if at all, should the school system put such a program in place?

APPENDIX B
DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTANTS

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE RELEVANT EXPERIENCE
OF NINE NATIONAL EXPERTS SELECTED TO
CONVENE IN WASHINGTON, D.C. TO REVIEW THE
POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF A CAREER
LADDER/DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING PROGRAM IN
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Michael Kane will have responsibility to organize and chair the convening process. Dr. Kane's career in education has spanned twenty years of involvement in a diverse set of research and policy and program development positions. He has been a classroom teacher. He holds two masters degrees and a doctorate in Educational Administration, all from Columbia University. After six years with Abt Associates, where he managed the organizational studies in education group and served as project director on several studies and substudies of major federal program initiatives, he joined the staff of the National Institute of Education as Assistant Director. When Dr. Kane left NIE in 1982 he was serving as Associate Director for dissemination and research on knowledge utilization. His major area of professional interest is in organizational change and improvement through the transfer and use of new research and program information as well as through the professional development of staff. For the past 3-1/2 years Dr. Kane has been actively involved in teacher development initiatives in Florida. He is currently President of a membership organization of Florida business enterprises concerned about improving K-12 education statewide. He serves as chairman of the Professional Teacher Career Development Council which is established in statute and appointed by Florida's governor to oversee implementation of Florida's career ladder program and other teacher related initiatives. He is also Chairman of the Florida Business and Education Coalition which is a group of state level association leaders working on issues of teacher working conditions and professionalism.

Dr. John Bennion is Superintendent of Schools, Salt Lake City, Utah. Dr. Bennion studied philosophy at the bachelors and masters level and holds a PhD from Ohio State in Educational Administration. A former high teacher of philosophy, ethics, and German he has been superintendent of schools in five school districts since 1969. He has been superintendent in Salt Lake City since 1985. While in Provo, Utah, he developed a career ladder program under a Utah State law that provides incentives for local districts to develop such programs. Since the beginning of his tenure in Salt Lake City, he has continued working on such programs in that district as well. Dr. Bennion's approach to career ladder programs involves developing job redesign structures that recognize and reinforce the professional development possibilities inherent in the career ladder concept. Ultimately his program designs serve to improve the practice of teaching and therefore the potential for student growth and achievement.

Dr. Homer Coker is currently an adjunct professor and project director in the College of Education of Georgia State University. Dr. Coker began his educational career in the late 1940's as a high school teacher in South Carolina. Since that time, he has served as a principal, district superintendent, area superintendent and professor of educational administration, a field in which he holds the PhD. Currently the Director of the Teacher Education Project at Georgia State, Dr. Coker has had a long standing interest in teacher evaluation practices. From 1973-1979 he directed a project which was engaged in extensive process/product studies in an effort to provide the Georgia State Department of Education with an experience base for certifying teachers. He has used his research data base to conduct effectiveness directed staff development programs in local school districts. Dr. Coker is currently a major consultant to the Alabama Department of Education in their effort to develop a statewide career incentive program. He has also worked with a school district in Texas to develop a professionally and empirically sound career

ladder program for teachers. He has published in the area of teacher evaluation independently and with Donald Medley and Bob Soar. He and his wife are developers of the Coker Instrument (Classroom Observation Keyed for Effective Research) which provides a framework for teacher evaluation.

Dr. Russell French spent five years teaching in the public school classrooms of Cincinnati, Ohio. Subsequent to that experience he completed a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction at Ohio State University and embarked on a career as a professor of education. He currently holds the rank of full professor in the department of curriculum and instruction at the University of Tennessee. Since April 1983, Dr. French has been "on loan" to the Office of the Governor and the Tennessee Department of Education serving as Executive Director of the Interim Certification Commission, the eighteen member body charged with developing and implementing the Tennessee Career Ladder Program. In this capacity, Dr. French's responsibilities include serving as chief staff person to the Commission, directing the development of all teacher evaluation systems, assisting in the conceptualization of career development programs and assisting in the restructuring of teacher certification. Currently Dr. French is serving as a consultant to the development of career ladder programs for the states of Alabama, Florida and Kentucky and school districts in Illinois, Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia. His broader consultation experience includes work in more than 100 school systems in 25 states and Central and South America and numerous other local projects and institutions. He writes extensively and since 1984 has published six articles on career ladders and teacher evaluation.

Dr. Thomas Jackson has held a variety of administrative and teaching posts at Florida A&M University. He currently serves as Dean of the College of Education of this 6,000 student, historically black, university. Dr. Jackson's career has had a dual focus on the preparation of minority students for professional service. He has played leadership roles in the preparation of minorities for scientific and technical careers including developing the school of technology at A&M and serving as its initial dean. In addition, Dr. Jackson has and continues to be actively involved in the preparation of minorities for careers in education — both teaching and administration. In addition to his deanship he has served as chair of A&M's administrative and supervision department. His primary substantive area of educational practice is vocational education and he has provided consultative services in this area both nationally and internationally. He currently serves as a member of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education's Committee on International Education. Schools such as Dr. Jackson's have traditionally been a major source of teachers for urban school districts such as DCPS and his perspectives on the issues of minority teacher recruitment are especially relevant to DCPS's needs.

Mrs. Kay Mitchell has been a classroom teacher of foreign language since the early 1960's. She holds a master's degree in educational administration and supervision and an educational specialist certificate of advanced study. After nearly twenty years' experience in the classroom she became involved with the development of the Charlotte Mecklenberg School District's career development program as an observer-evaluator of other teachers. She worked with Philip Schlechty to help design and implement the program and since 1985 has been director of the Career

Development Program. The Charlotte Mecklenberg program does not characterize itself as a career ladder program in the sense of other southeastern career ladder programs that seek to evaluate teaching behaviors and rank teachers for pay accordingly. It views itself as a professional development program which utilizes an in-school professional team to apply a set of specific criteria to assess a teacher's growth over a one year period. Teachers who then meet the expectations of their particular career are classified as Career 1 teachers and receive an additional level of compensation beyond the standard salary schedule. In addition to her local responsibilities, Mrs. Mitchell meets monthly in Raleigh with directors of 16 other pilot career ladder programs in North Carolina. Therefore, she is familiar with a range of approaches to this concept as it is being implemented in North Carolina.

Dr. Andrew Robinson serves as Director, Florida Institute of Education, a statewide research and development institute of the Florida University System and as Dean, College of Education, University of North Florida. Dr. Robinson has had a long and distinguished career in urban school systems as an administrator, principal and teacher and in university administration including two years of service as interim president, University of North Florida. As a leader in teacher preparation and teacher career development in Florida, Dr. Robinson was appointed by Governor Bob Graham to Florida's Professional Teacher Career Development Council. In this role he has provided valuable input and oversight to the development of Florida's career ladder program. Dr. Robinson's substantive areas of interest in education include mathematics and science and the education of minorities. As Dean of an emerging urban and regional university serving many young people who are the first generation of their family to attend college, Dr. Robinson is especially concerned with the issues involved in the recruitment of young people to careers in teaching and their retention in educational service.

Dr. Loretta Webb is Deputy Superintendent for curriculum and staff development in the Fairfax County, Virginia School District. In this role she is responsible for the Department of Instruction, Staff Development and Training and Vocational and Adult Education. Fairfax County is in the process of implementing a Teacher Performance Evaluation program which will result in differentiated pay scales and career opportunity. As Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Webb's responsibilities include the training of all personnel who will have leadership responsibilities in this new program — particularly those filling consulting teacher and teacher observation roles. Prior to her service in Fairfax, Dr. Webb served as Assistant Superintendent for Instruction in Charles County, Maryland, as Director of the Department of Quality Integrated Education, as a supervisor of Instruction and as a social studies specialist in Montgomery County, Maryland. She has also served as a Division Director and Assistant State Superintendent for Instruction in the Maryland State Department of Education. Dr. Webb's career as a teacher began in the District of Columbia Public Schools. As a professional who has spent her entire career concerned with instructional issues in systems serving the Washington metropolitan area, she is especially well grounded in the situation currently confronting DCPS.

Dr. Gloria Williams has been engaged in the professional development of educators for a period of twenty years. She holds a doctorate in Education from the University of Oregon. Prior to and following her doctoral studies, Dr. Williams served as a staff

member of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in a variety of positions developing training materials and programs to implement professional development activities for a wide range of educational staff in the United States and overseas. A particular focus of her work was in professional development experiences for vocational educators. For the past several years Dr. Williams has been a member of the staff of the Connecticut Department of Education. Her work in the Bureau of Professional Development has included the development of several professional development programs for Connecticut teachers. She has been responsible for developing the specifications for Connecticut's pilot teacher incentive programs which include career ladder initiatives. She is currently designing new program specifications for a statewide teacher incentives program which will also include provisions for the development of career ladder programs in Connecticut school districts.

APPENDIX C

AGENDA OF CONVENING EVENT
INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED
QUESTIONS PURSUED

AGENDA

Convening Process to Review Potential Career Ladder/Differentiated Staffing Programs in District of Columbia Public Schools

July 13-15, 1987

July 13, 1987

2:00 p.m. Introduction and Orientation (Superintendent's Conference
Room 12th Floor
The Presidential Building
415 - 12th Street, N.W.)

Participants: Consultants, Core DCPS Staff

Activities: Introduction of participants
Review and Clarify Objectives
Review Preliminary Analyses and Recommendations
Review Procedures for next two days

Goals: To introduce participants
To reach consensus regarding group goals and
procedures
To make explicit individual preliminary assessments
and recommendations
To conduct preliminary discussion of issues

Expected
Outcomes: List of succinct objectives
List of initial recommendations

Leaders: Joan Brown, Michael Kane, Dennis Holmes

4:30 p.m. Private Time to Prepare for Dinner

7:00 p.m. Reception (Charles Sumner School)

Participants: Consultants, DCPS Core Staff, DCPS Senior Staff

Activities: Statement by DCPS Superintendent,
Dr. Floretta Dukes McKenzie
Socialize

8:30 p.m.

Review of Interviewing Activities

(Hyatt Regency)

Participants:

Consultants, DCPS Core Staff

Activities:

Review data requirements for interviewees

Goal:

To reach consensus on panel's data requirements and procedures for obtaining them through face to face interviews

Expected

Shared goals for interviews
Specification of interview procedures

Leaders:

Michael Kane, Dennis Holmes

July 14, 1987

3:00 a.m.

Breakfast

(Superintendent's Conference Room)

8:30 a.m.

On-site Review

Participants:

Consultants, DCPS Core Staff and invited respondents

Activities:

Group interviews of seven stakeholder groups.
Identifying issues and problems found by DCPS
regarding all aspects of instructional staffing and
receptivity to alternative solutions

Goal:

To develop comprehensive data base from which recommendations may be developed

Expected

Enhanced awareness of issues, problems and constraints concerning further development of DCPS instructional personnel system

Leaders:

Michael Kane, Dennis Holmes

4:45 p.m. Private Time and Dinner

7:30 p.m. Review of Interviews and Development of Tentative Recommendations (Hyatt Regency)

Participants: Consultants, Core DCPS Staff

Activities: Exchange information concerning first set of interviews
Synthesize findings
Develop tentative recommendations

Goals: To initiate development of consensus on presenting issues and recommended solutions

Expected Outcomes: Identification of range of perspectives on presenting issues and recommended solutions

Leaders: Michael Kane, Dennis Holmes

July 15, 1987

8:00 a.m. Breakfast

(Superintendent's Conference Room)

8:30 a.m. Convening Sessions

Participants: Consultants, DCPS Staff

Activities: Determine findings and develop recommendations

Goals: To determine group's findings and recommendations and format of report

Expected Outcomes: Specification of findings and recommendations keyed to objectives
Specification of report's major topics

Leaders: Michael Kane, Dennis Holmes

11:45 a.m. Lunch

12: 30 p.m. Outline Report and Specify Writing Assignments

Participants: Consultants and Core DCPS Staff

Activities: Develop detailed outline of report and assignment of writing responsibilities

Goals: To outline final report in detail

Expected Outcomes: Report outline
Writing Assignments

Leaders: Michael Kane, Dennis Holmes

2:30 p.m. Exit Interview

Participants: Consultants, Core DCPS Staff, Senior DCPS Administrators

Activities: Present and discuss group's findings and recommendations

Goals: To communicate and refine findings and recommendations

Expected
Outcomes:

DCPS personnel aware of group's initial findings and
recommendations
Further refinement of findings, recommendations and
report outline

Leaders:

Joan Brown, Dennis Holmes, Norman Gold

5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Convening Process
Career Ladder/Differentiated Staffing

AGENDA

TUESDAY, JULY 14, 1987

SUPERINTENDENT'S CONFERENCE ROOM
415 12th Street, N.W., 12th Floor

SESSION	PARTICIPANTS
8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	Andrew Jenkins Deputy Superintendent J. Weldon Greene Director, Program Development and Planning Mary Hendrick Director, Personnel Certification and Accreditation Dorothy Stephens Director, Instructional Services Center George Margolies Legal Counsel, Legal, Regulatory & Legislative Branch Norman Gold Director, Research and Evaluation Louise White Director, Staff Development
9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	P. Gary Freeman Director, Human Resource Management James Guines Associate Superintendent, Office of Instructions Joan Brown Director, Incentive Program for Teachers David Huie Director, Management Planning & Quality Assurance Ken Nickoles Director, Labor Relations Branch Bob Boyd Board Member, Ward 6 Gordon Lewis Supervising Director, Mathematics

SESSION	PARTICIPANTS	
10:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.	Floretta Dukes McKenzie Superintendent	
11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Teachers: Margaret Washington Stuart Gary Karen Webster Toni Hill Paulene Bryant Toni Farmer Regina Gilchrist Costella Johnson	
1:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	Thomas Harper Region A Superintendent	Patricia Greer Principal, Hearst ES
	Shelia Handy Region B Superintendent	Carolyn Preston Principal, Bunker Hill ES
	Barbara Jackson Region C Superintendent	Constance Clark Principal, Smothers ES
	William Brown Region D Superintendent	James C. Greene Principal, Woodson JHS
	Paul Woods Asst. Supt., Special Ed.	Gary Geiger Principal, Francis JHS
3:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Ann Thomas Principal, Spingarn SHS	
	Small group sessions with:	
	Mr. William Simons President, Washington Teachers Union	
	Ms. Delabian Rice-Thurston President, Parents United	
	Ms. Hazel L. Brown President, D.C. Congress of PTAs	
	Dr. Lee Kneselkamp Dean, American University	
	Sr. Rose Marie Bosier Dean, Trinity College	
	Dr. Willie T. Howard Dean, Howard University	

SESSION

3:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Small group sessions with: (Con't.)

Dr. Judy Christian
Dean, University of the District of Columbia

Dr. Jay Shotel
Dean, George Washington University

Dr. Sarah Pickert
Chairperson, Catholic University

GENERAL QUESTIONS TO PREPARE INTERVIEWEES

CAREER LADDERS/DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING

I. General Questions:

A. Purpose and Goals

- (1) What are the needs that exist in the school district which you believe a career ladder might effectively address; and if you had a career ladder in the district, what are the purposes you envision for such a program?
- (2) Should improved student performance (broadly defined) be a goal of such a program?
- (3) The 1984 incentive report recommended a career ladder program (recommendation #2) and a school based incentive program (recommendation #4). To what extent should a school based incentive program be a part or related to planning a career ladder program?
- (4) Are there goals other than provision of incentives to attract and retain teachers and improved student performance which should be a part of such a program?
- (5) What expectations does the general public and/or school board hold regarding the outcome of a career ladder program, should one be implemented?

B. Readiness

- (1) Assuming that a career ladder program would require a well-conceived evaluation process for making career ladder promotion decisions, what is your assessment of the present state of teacher evaluation in the district; to what extent do you think the teacher evaluation process would need to be improved in order to have credibility for making career ladder promotions? More specifically, what important evaluation elements are in the present program and what, if any, are missing that would need to be developed?
- (2) Besides the Intern-Mentor Program and the Department Chairperson Program, what other formalized programs are there that reward and empower teachers?
- (3) What are the current political forces that tend to be supportive of a career ladder program and what are the forces that tend to be resistant? At this time, what degree of readiness do you think there is for embarking upon a career ladder program? Among teachers? Administrators? The Board of Education? The Congress?

- (4) Related to the foregoing question, how probable is it that a well conceived career ladder program that has broad support among teachers, administrators and board members will be funded by the Congress so that other programs would not have to be reduced or eliminated in order to support a career ladder? What other funding sources are there for such a program?
- (5) There is a very strong egalitarian tradition in the teaching profession that teachers be rewarded and treated the same, subject only to differences based on years of experience and graduate credits. How open is the teaching staff, in general, and the leadership of the union, in particular, to developing a model that would differentiate teachers in such areas as length of contract and professional responsibilities above and beyond but not in place of traditional classroom responsibilities?
- (6) Does the district have a comprehensive instructional improvement model that involves the active participation of teachers in such endeavors as improving the curriculum, upgrading the quality of teaching and developing more effective ways of assessing student learning? To the extent that there is a districtwide comprehensive improvement plan, to what extent do administrators and teachers currently envision the possibility of utilizing teacher expertise and additional time to advance the overall instructional improvement goals of the district through a career ladder program?
- (7) To what extent do board members, administrators and teachers currently feel that the teaching role should be redesigned toward year-long employment for those who wish it and opportunities for advancing in professional responsibilities over a career cycle in order to attract and retain first-rate people in the classrooms of the Washington, D.C., schools?

C. Program Design

- (1) What might be appropriate steps for a career ladder (e.g., levels of classroom performance, differentiated roles such as mentor teacher, department chair, etc.)?
- (2) What limitations must be imposed on program development (e.g., limited financial resources, present framework of roles/jobs)?
- (3) What candidate restrictions might be necessary in developing a program (e.g., quotas, experience requirements, advanced degree requirements)?

- (4) Who other than classroom teachers should have access to a career ladder program?
- (5) If personnel evaluation is to provide a basis for award decisions, to what extent is peer evaluation desirable and viable?
- (6) To what extent should professional development (career development) programs be integrated with the career ladder program?
- (7) What should be the role of the local building administrator in implementing a program?

II. Program Specific Questions

A. Teacher Evaluation

- (1) What evaluation process is currently used to evaluate teachers? What instruments are used? How frequent are classroom observations conducted? How is classroom performance weighted versus other criteria?
- (2) Are there formative teacher evaluations as well as summative ones?
- (3) How is the performance evaluation monitored for reliability across schools?
- (4) How is evaluation viewed by teachers?
- (5) Is there conscious efforts to assist teachers through remediation/growth opportunities following evaluation?

B. Staff Development

- (1) What is the main focus of the district's current staff development efforts? Are the needs dictated by the school district, by individual schools/principals, or by curriculum departments?
- (2) Are there ongoing inservice requirements of all new employees?
- (3) How many graduate degree programs are currently being handled by the Consortium? Does the DCPS pay any of the tuition for the interns?
- (4) Are there inservice requirements for mentors of the Intern-Mentor Program (beyond the summer 1985 institute) and for chairpersons of the Department Chairperson Program, on such topics as conferencing, the adult learner, conflict management?

C. Intern-Mentor Program

- (1) How effective is the program perceived to be?
- (2) What are seen as its strengths and weaknesses?
- (3) Are mentors willingly returning to teaching positions after two-year appointments? What ratio are returning to the classroom? To administrative positions?
- (4) What is the perception of other teachers (non-interns) toward the mentors?

D. Department Chairperson Program

- (1) How effective is the Department Chairperson Program perceived to be?
- (2) Has it been equally effective in every school?
- (3) Is there consistency in the way the program is managed in every school?
- (4) Are there curriculum specialists at the central level who direct/assist the chairpersons?
- (5) The original appointment for chairpersons was for two years. Has it developed into a rotating position?
- (6) How do the other teachers view the position?
- (7) What have been the unintended outcomes of the program?
- (8) Is the position perceived as a powerful one?
- (9) What is the relationship between the principal and the chairpersons?
- (10) Does the chairperson directly or indirectly evaluate/assist in the evaluation of the department teachers?
- (11) Has the program been expanded to include additional schools beyond the 1984 pilot?
- (12) Have chairpersons willingly relinquished the appointment and how have the ineffective chairpersons been dealt with?

III. Role Group Specific Questions:

A. Principals

- (1) How much time do you spend in formal classroom observations? Informal walk-throughs? Post-observation conferences?
- (2) What do you consider the major instructional weakness of your staff?
- (3) What training, if any, would you want if a career ladder program is formalized?

B. Teachers

- (1) What is your greatest concern if a career ladder program is implemented?
- (2) Should a career ladder reflect increased classroom/instructional expertise as the steps advance?
- (3) Should peer observers/evaluators be part of the evaluation process?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR EACH GROUP OF INTERVIEWEES

CENTRAL OFFICE

IA - 1

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR NEEDS FACING DCPS WHICH A CAREER LADDER MIGHT EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS? WHAT OTHER NEEDS ARE PRESSING? WHAT PURPOSES WOULD A CAREER LADDER DEAL WITH PRIMARILY? SECONDARILY? SHOULD THE FOCUS BE ON REWARDING ACHIEVEMENT OR ON BUILDING ACHIEVEMENT (I.E., PROFESSIONAL GROWTH)?

IB - 1

HOW DO YOU CHARACTERIZE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF CURRENT TEACHER EVALUATION PROCESS? WHAT IS THE PRESENT STATE OF TEACHER EVALUATION? HOW SHOULD IT BE IMPROVED TO SUPPORT A CAREER LADDER PROGRAM? WHAT NEEDED ELEMENTS ARE PRESENT? WHICH NEED TO BE DEVELOPED?

IB - 3

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT FORCES/TRENDS THAT TEND TO BE SUPPORTIVE OF SUCH A PROGRAM? WHAT ARE THE "POLITICS" OF THE CURRENT SITUATION? WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF READINESS FOR SUCH A PROGRAM -- AMONG DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, TEACHERS, LINE ADMINISTRATORS, BOARD, ETC.?

IB - 1

WHAT IS YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM -- ITS NEEDS, STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES? WHAT IS ITS MAJOR FOCUS? ITS RELATIONSHIP TO TEACHER EVALUATION? WHAT DRIVES ITS FOCUS -- THE DISTRICT, SCHOOLS/PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS, CURRICULUM NEEDS, ETC?

SUPERINTENDENT

1. WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES, NEEDS, FORCES, ETC. FACING THE SYSTEM? WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES?
2. WHERE IS A CAREER LADDER, POTENTIALLY, AMONG ALL THESE? HOW CAN A CAREER LADDER SERVE THESE NEEDS AND ISSUES? WHAT WOULD YOU HOPE TO GET OUT OF A CAREER LADDER PROGRAM? HOW WOULD YOU HOPE TO SEE IT IMPACT TEACHING AND LEARNING?
3. WHAT IS THE CURRENT CAPACITY TO MOUNT SUCH A PROGRAM?
 - A) A CHAMPION(S) TO LEAD IT
 - B) THE COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENT IT
 - C) THE TECHNICAL SKILLS, COMPETENCIES NECESSARY TO CONDUCT IT
 - D) THE FISCAL/HUMAN RESOURCES TO CARRY IT OUT

AREA SUPERINTENDENTS/PRINCIPALS

- 1) CENTRAL OFFICE QUESTION
- 2) HOW EFFECTIVE DO YOU BELIEVE THE DEPT. CHAIR AND MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN?
- 3) WHAT WOULD BE THE TRAINING NEEDS FOR YOU AND YOUR FACULTIES IF A CAREER LADDER PROGRAM WERE IMPLEMENTED?
- 4) DESCRIBE THE CURRENT FORMAL AND INFORMAL TEACHER EVALUATION PROCESS. WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT PRACTICE CONCERNING EVALUATION — FORMAL CLASSROOM OBSERVATION? INFORMAL WALK-THROUGHS? CONFERENCES?
- 5) CAREER LADDER DISCUSSIONS FREQUENTLY INVOLVE CONCEPTS OF TEACHER INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING. DO YOU SEE THIS AS TAKING OVER YOUR ROLE, ADDING TO YOUR ABILITY TO BE EFFECTIVE, UNREALISTIC RHETORIC, ETC.?

TEACHERS

- 1) PLEASE DESCRIBE AND TELL US HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THE CURRENT:
EVALUATION SYSTEM
STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAM
DEPT. CHAIR PROGRAM
- 2) HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT AND INTERPRET THE IDEA OF A CAREER LADDER PROGRAM?
- 3) HOW MUCH DECISION-MAKING POWER DO YOU NOW HAVE IN YOUR ROLE AS CLASSROOM TEACHER? AS A FACULTY MEMBER? AS A FACULTY?
- 4) HOW SHOULD A CAREER LADDER PROGRAM BE STRUCTURED? WHAT FACTORS WOULD MAKE IT WORK? WHAT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO GAIN YOUR SUPPORT AND THAT OF YOUR COLLEAGUES?

TEACHER EDUCATORS

- 1) DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE SCHOOL DISTRICT. HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE THESE RELATIONSHIPS - HEALTHY, MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL, ONE-SIDED, EFFECTIVE, ETC?
- 2) WHAT WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE CONTINUUM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL - PRE-SERVICE, INDUCTION, INSERVICE ADVANCED TRAINING? WHO SHOULD DO WHAT? IN WHAT SETTINGS? USING WHAT PERSONNEL (I.E. UNIV BASED, CLINICAL, ETC?)

UNION LEADERS

- 1) FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE, WHAT ARE THE MAJOR ISSUES FACING THIS SCHOOL DISTRICT?
- 2) WHAT WOULD IT TAKE FOR A CAREER LADDER PROGRAM TO BE AN EFFECTIVE ADDITION TO THIS SCHOOL DISTRICT'S AGENDA? HOW SHOULD SUCH A PROGRAM BE APPROACHED, STRUCTURED, DEVELOPED?
- 3) WHAT WOULD IT TAKE FOR SUCH A PROGRAM TO HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE DISTRICT'S TEACHERS?

PARENT GROUPS

- 1) WHAT ARE YOUR MAJOR CONCERNS ABOUT THE SCHOOL SYSTEM GENERALLY - ABOUT TEACHERS AND TEACHING SPECIFICALLY?
- 2) WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE POTENTIAL FOR CAREER LADDERS RESPONDING TO THESE ISSUES, TO OTHER ISSUES OF TEACHER QUALITY, SKILLS, ETC?
- 3) WHAT WOULD IT TAKE IN THE DESIGN OF SUCH A PROGRAM FOR YOU TO SUPPORT IT? TO SEEK THE RESOURCES NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT IT?